YOUR AMIGA
The Entertainment Magazine
April 1990 £1.95 14.00DM

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FREE X-OUT POSTER



WOMEN ON SCREEN

ELVIRA!
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Senlac

Drakkhen Clues from Tip to Tail

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AMIGA 500/1000/2000
PC & COMPATIBLES

INFOGRAMES

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The Entertainment Magazine

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AN ARGUS SPECIALIST PUBLICATION

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Head Start – Klax, Budokan, Terrarium and a bunch of other new releases.

Risk – Diamond Disk Award.

Virgin Risk Competition – Win Virgin's recent releases, copies of Risk, The Computer Game, and Risk, The Boardgame.

Three Pints – YA's Budget corral. The games cost about as much as Three Pints of Lager and a packet of crisps.

Disk Storm Competition – There's no need to say more than £1200 of Free Disks.

PD Column – Allen Webb's regular look at Public Domain availability.

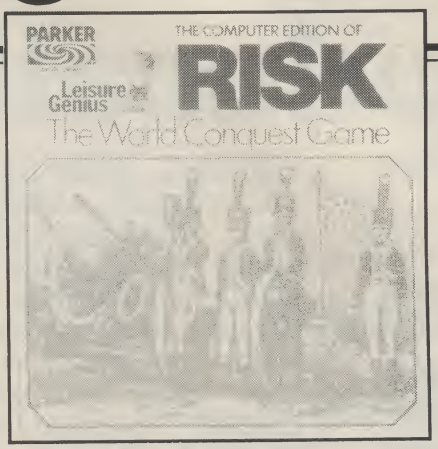
USA Today – Paul Rigby puts the US under the microscope looking for creepy crawlies, bugs and fish.

Women on Screen – You can't live with them, you can't live without them, Ladies and Ladies we'd like to present women on screen!

Who Cares About Sex Anyway? – Kati Hamza on a gender bender.

OASIS – They came from the desert – Intellectual exercise or practical solution? Pamphleteering against sexism!

ELVIRA – Tynesoft's baby looks like a stunning piece of games software.



FREE X-Out Poster – Courtesy of Rainbow Arts and YA.

Reader Offer – Hostages, Chicago 90, and Safari Guns – £25.99 FOR ALL THREE in YA's Entertainment Pack No.1.

Behind The Screens – Paul Rigby with Danielle Woodyatt, Linda Wright and Anita Sinclair.

Tints and Hips – Drakkhen, The Kristal, Indy the Adventure – Maps, tips and frivolous indiscretion from Kirk and Euge Ashley Cu-Cu Cotter-Cairns.

Quickstep – Going faster with a co-processor. Mark Webb gets some shocking treatment.

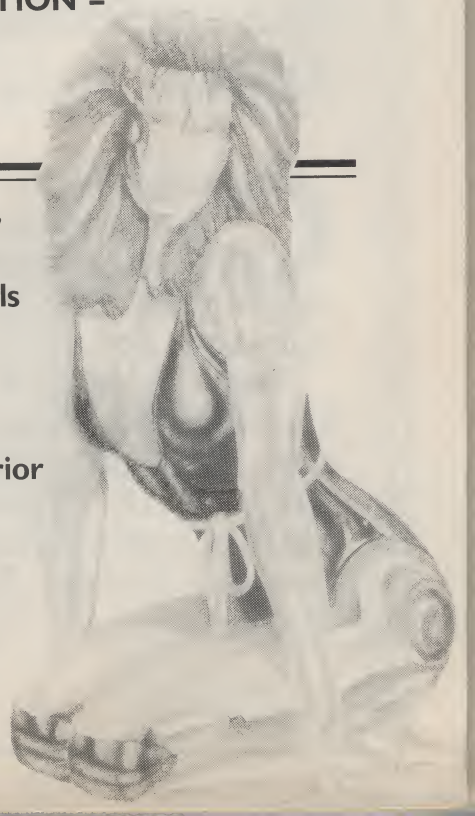
Animasharn Motivasharn – Animation City c/o YA. PD introductions to animating, general blib-blab and frolicking jitters from Mark Webb.

SWALK – Brain Drain answers your letters.

TOP TEN COMPETITION – £400 of CRL games to be WON!!

REVIEWS

Risk
Sideshow
Reel Fishin
Elvira
Herewith the Clues
Stryx
Conqueror
Knights of Crystallion
Soldier 2000
Overlander
After the War
Bloodwych, Data Disk
Beverly Hills Cop
Rings of Medusa
Blade Warrior
Rotor
Aquanaut
Typhoon Thompson



A Meagre education

Parents desparate for educational software for their offspring can always keep an eye on LCL in Henley-on-Thames. Already the company has launched a maths program for 11-year-olds plus French and English courses for eight-year-olds based on the National Curriculum GCSE courses

The programs are written for the BBC computers and Commodore's BBC Emulator is required to run the programs which cost £24 each.

Phantom of the Sysops

The Phantom viewdata bulletin board has added an Amiga Area which is edited by Ernest Crabbe. The BPS offers over 1400 pages of on-line info and has now opened up its facilities to quest callers.

Membership can be gained by paying a once only joining fee of £7.50 which shouldn't break anyone's piggy bank and further details can be obtained from the sysop Keith (Spector) Burton on the BB (0226 340425. speed V23 or V22) or via Prestel Mbx 226340425.

Perhaps the dazzling contents of Dame Edna's wardrobe has inspired Aussie company Gary Rainer Electronics to develop its Colourburst machine. When plugged into the Amiga it makes the standard 4096 colours pale in comparison by offering 16.8 million colours.

With resolutions ranging from 320:200 up to 1472:512 in Super Hi-res mode, the system allows extremely smooth colour generations which appear totally continuous. The only drawback is that a maximum of 256 colours from the full range can be used at the lowest resolution and only four colours in Super Hi-res. Still, as the celebrated sexist Dr Johnson once said when comparing a woman preacher to a dog standing on its hind legs, the surprise is not that it does it well

Better t

Spectravideo, formerly UK agents for Quickshot joysticks is now handling the sales of the Quickjoy range.

A joystick is hardly something to fire the imagination, as long as it does its job who cares what it looks like? Well, Quickjoy seem to find them exciting. Over the next year, Spectravideo hopes to release 15 different products ranging from £10 to almost £40. We can hardly contain ourselves.

Stick Up

Market Force

Commodore Marketing International, the recently formed support group for Commodore's sales operations, has appointed Steve Paul as its marketing manager for consumer products.

Steve joins CMI from Philips Consumer Electronics where he had a number of sales and marketing posts between 1985 and 1989. With Commodore, his job is to maintain the development of Commodore's position in the European home-computer market.



YA RANT



but that it does it at all.

Colourburst is a significant step forward for all those who want seamless colour graduations in their graphics and at £199 ($400 in Oz) it can hardly be called overpriced.

At the moment we don't know of a British distributor but Gary can be contacted by phone at Brunswick Heads on (066) 851 900 or faxed on (066) 851 014.

Everage than

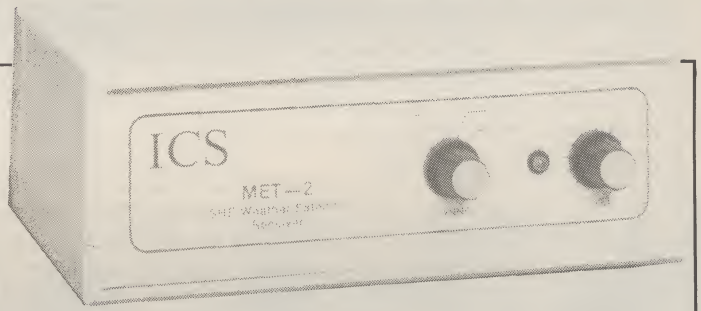
Print p.a.

How many years have printers been around? How many confusing manuals have been printed? Why has nobody thought of producing a demo disk until now?

Citizen's latest value added project is to include a PC disk with each of its ProDot 24 printers. On the disk is software which allows the user to create and save suitable default configurations for their own purposes and a graphics designer for customised character sets and logos.

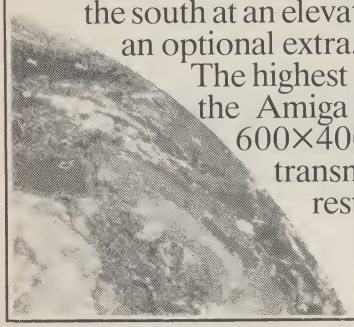
As an Amiga owner it is now your job to inundate companies like Citizen, Star and Epson with letters demanding a similar service for your machine. It's a great idea and worthy of a larger circulation.

Fish Eye View



ICS Electronics is offering a DIY Michael Fish kit in the form of a weather satellite receiver. Now you too can indulge yourself in cloud animation sequences and weather prediction with the aid of Meteosat 4 satellite pictures.

The ICS kit comprises a receiver, pre-amplifier, a 3 metre Yagi antenna and 20 metres of cable, mains power supply and Amiga, PC or ST software. All you have to supply is a computer and a clear view to the south at an elevation of approximately 30 degrees. Unfortunately, a bulldozer is not supplied as an optional extra.



The highest resolution version is really aimed at PC VGA+ systems (800×600 pixels) but the Amiga version, which requires a 0.5Mbyte expansion, gives a quite acceptable 600×400 pixels resolution. The software is designed to capture the images which are transmitted at four minute intervals and updated every hour. Once stored on disk, the rest is up to your abilities. Programmers can create their own animated sequences.

As a teaching aid, the MET-2 kit brings the real world into focus for £599.95 plus VAT.

MIDI Music

The Stock, Aitken and Waterman fan will be interested in the MIDI Music Show which is due to take place at the Novotel in Hammersmith on April 7 and 9.

At the venue which has hosted the Commodore Shows for several years there will be over 60 companies exhibiting their MIDI wares both hard and soft. This is not just a home enthusiast show but also ranges through professional instruments, samplers, sequencers and drum machines with a wide range of software for all types of computer.

Seminars, demos and conferences also form an integral part of the exhibition. So any budding Kylie or Jason better be there or be square . . . or both.

SHOE PRIZE

An extra special prize to readers of YA this month is the Brown Brogue Award – Free Brown Brogue for answering the simple question: **How do you spell Reyjavik?**

Answers please on a postcard to YA, Argus House, Boundary Way, Hemel Hempstead HP2 7ST by May 1st. Specifying **Left** or **Right** and **Size of Shoe**

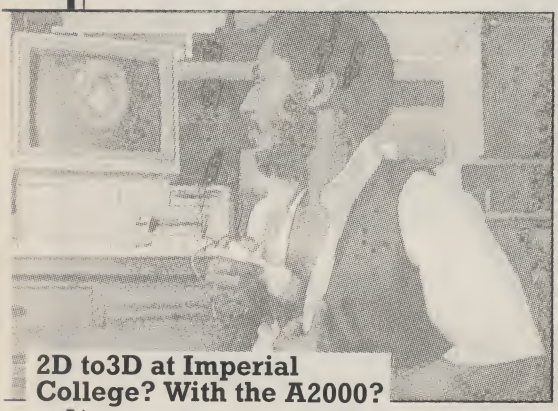
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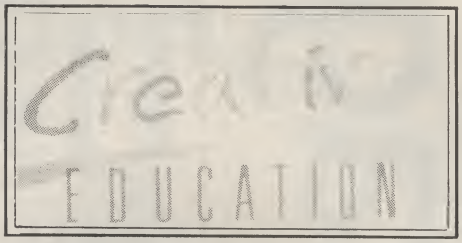
Pious words mix with hardware freaks at the BETT show

The education and training of this country's youth in the 90s is a very serious subject and so is selling computers to schools. Commodore are now taking it more seriously than ever. Education Minister Alan Howarth opened this year's British Education and Training Technology show with the usual reassurances about government funding and positive messages for technology across the curriculum but also with a pertinent comment about 'more computers than ever' being needed in the coming decade.

Commodore had a good autumn 1989 with sales of 7,000 Amiga 500s since the launch of their Class of the 90s pack. The Amiga has found favour with teachers for special needs who work with children who have learning difficulties but find the computer a stimulating tool. The 2000 is being used to teach programming (note the Modula 2 implementation) at Nottingham University, to provide information at the London College of Printing and to do medical research at Imperial College London.



2D to3D at Imperial College? With the A2000?



The Amiga is unsurprisingly making headway as the computer for art and design. The three dimensional CAD and animation, as well as digitising and colour printer support, appeal to teachers implementing new against formidable competition in the shape of the Acorn Archimedes in this area but offers a wider range of software thanks to developments in the USA. Art and design is one area of the curriculum where cultural differences do not effect the value of software in education.

Animation featured especially strongly on the Commodore stand from Dpaint III to Cromacolour's animation line tester and storyboarder. There's nothing like the latter product on any other micro (01 636 2103).

The video recorder is a common resource in most schools and sooner or later the micro and the video are going to get together. Commodore have good support in this respect from specialists Maze Technology. The range and depth of software coming out of America once again gives the Amiga an edge and Maze are turning this to their advantage here. too (01 520 9753).

It was apparent from the show that getting computers into education is about supporting the users - the teaching staff and students. This is something which Commodore seem to have got right with their Class of the 90s package. Of course it's also about selling hardware at 'educational' prices. I talked to a representative of HMSO, a government supply organisation who explained that they are diversifying into computer equipment to supply for education. HMSO have set up a complete testing department to evaluate equipment and both Commodore PCs and Amiga machines are now available at 'preferential' (education only) rates from HMSO (0603 695016).



The Amiga also has to fit into an existing classroom environment and the development of a Concept Keyboard, a flat tablet input device for young children, and an upgrade release of the BBC Emulator are further steps towards 'fitting in'.

The word that sums up Commodore's campaign, and indeed genuine contribution, for education is CREATIVE. Ten out of ten for art and design, ten out of ten for games. Other subjects: could do better.

Mark Webb

Dave Chapman

Age 25, Lives in Peterborough

Joined **Virgin** in June 1984.

Well known titles include *Sorcery and Sorcery+* (hit game on the Amstrad CPC), *Dan Dare* on the Spectrum, and *Dan Dare II* an Action force on the C64.

Favourite 8 bit computer: Amstrad CPC.

Graduated to the Amiga when he wrote the Amiga version of the best selling program *Scrabble* for the **Leisure Genius** label.

Left **Virgin** in August 1988 when he moved to Peterborough and went freelance. First major title was *RISK* for the Atari ST and Amiga, which is written in a combination of C and 68000. The C was originated on the IBM PC and handles the general gameplay and computer player strategy. The 68000 handles all of the graphics and user interface.

RISK took a long time to complete because of the extensive approval process it had to go through at **Parker Brothers** in the States (they own the *RISK* licence). Dave says "It was hard work but well worth it in the end."

Dave writes for both the ST and Amiga now, but prefers the Amiga.

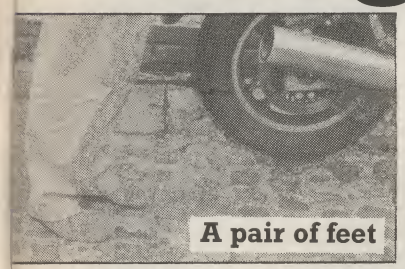
As well as the work for Virgin, he has completed a number of titles for **Palace Software**, including *Barbarian II* on the Amiga.



YA RANT



Diamond Risk and Lunacy Hedgehog



A pair of feet

Whatever they're doing those feet have won diamond at Amiga programming.

As an extra special treat Virgin get our Lunacy Hedgehog - a picture of a horse!

A programmer's pair of feet are enough to put anyone off their porridge for life. At ten o'clock in the morning in a cold and windy courtyard in Westbourne Park the man has got to be a lunatic or have incredibly large feet (so no one could find shoes big enough to fit them) Either that or he's in a striptease race to keep his receptionist amused.



A Hoise

Virgin Win Diamond Disk for Risk

Pictured side saddle on her Puch 50 is Leslie Walker waiting to get a very special delivery for Virgin Mastertronic's *RISK* which gets 96% in this issue.

The famous board conversion has taken quite a while to get the licence sorted out but now that's it here it's well worth getting hold of. YA is running a VIRGIN RISK COMPETITION, also in this month.



Yes working at Virgin is one helluva risky biscuit

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HEADSTART

Venus (Gremlin)

Venus is the latest game to appear from Gremlin and, with the current worries about genetic engineering, it is a timely release guaranteed to add a little zip to your Amiga.

Flies are the key insects in a world where the ecological balance has been upset by Man. A specially man-made fly has been introduced but a virus has caused mutations which are killers. Setting a thief to catch a thief, a new strain of fly has been engineered to seek and destroy the mutants.

As the fly progresses through the game it finds five icons which give it limited special powers to supplement its considerable fire power. The buzz is to wipe out as many mutants as possible as a lone fly SWAT team.

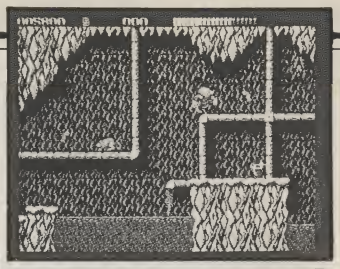


Budokan (E.A)

Budokan: The Martial Spirit may sound like an aftershave but Electronic Arts sees it as a close shave with death.

Budokan brings together four martial arts techniques and some meaty opponents. Like all good novices, the day begins with training in the Dojo against a sparring partner, The master, or sansei, is there to introduce a sprinkling of philosophy into the proceedings.

In the tournament which follows, the freshly learned skills in Karate, Kendo, Bu and Nunchaku can be honed against grinding opposition. Unfortunately, the opponents may be using other skills such as ninjitsu, Naginata or Kusari-Gama. Is that clear? Well £24.99 may bring greater enlightenment.



Impossamole (Gremlin)

'Whatever next' murmured Jimmenie Cricket, 'a new arcade style Monty game for moles!' Yes, Impossamole as it might seem Monty is back with a frolicking new image to captivate a whole new generation of the uninitiate. And he's there for those of us who've seen him before. Unashamedly Japanese in his 'resurrection' his navy blue jacket 'll have your sister heaa over heels in love with him.

4 Levels due out in April at 20 quid.

Klax (Domark)

The Tic-tac-tile game!!!!!

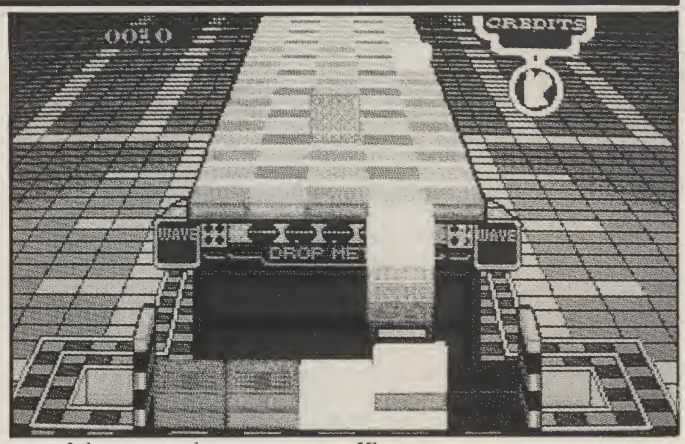
If you believe that this game's as simple as you think then you're in for a humungous wopper of a shock.

What you have to do is catch a variety of coloured tiles as they roll down the screen and plonk them into bins below. After that you have to try and arrange the tiles in lines of three of the same colour. That equates to Klax or a colour line up.

But your lines get longer, and more tiles fall, and the numbers of colours increases until you flunk out of the game because you can't catch the little bleeders.

There are diagonal Klaxes and runs of Klaxes..and klaxes of Klaxes.

The game's a result of a simultaneous coin-op Atari release.It's to be brought to you by Domark on April 10th



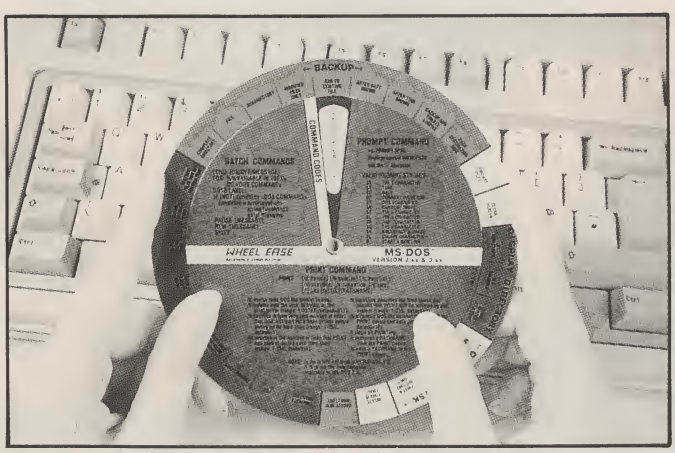


Wheel Ease Guides Flight sim Navigation 2.2

P.C. Fiends!!! AArrgh!!!

Amiga fiends you can't use this. It's PC only but you might like to have a look. One of the good things about is that no matter which way you hold it it's always the right way up. Great, eh?

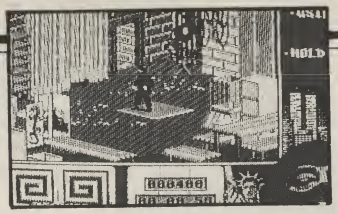
If you think you want it it'll cost you £9.99 for an unusable piece of plastic. Cat frisbbie time.



Terrarium (Mirrorsoft)

A groovier version of Honey I Shrunk the Kids.On par with Azimov's The Fantastic Voyage, with Raquel Welch and Donald Pleasance, or 'the funny' Inner Space with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan. Mirrorsoft's Terrarium features stunning green, brown earthy coloured graphics and a similar dissappearing intravascular body politic plot. Get to the juicy bits.

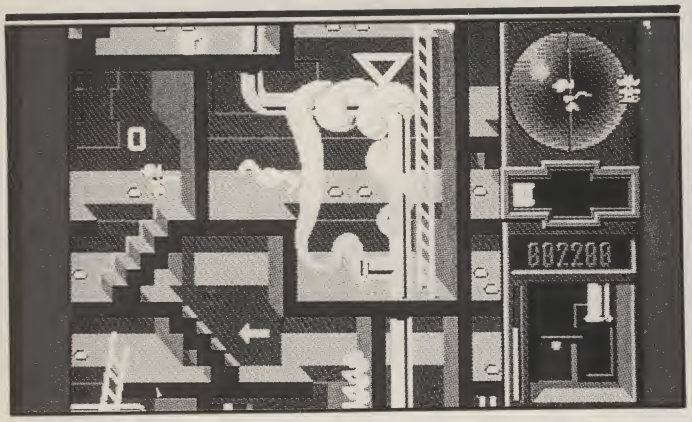




Tusker and Last Ninja 2 (System 3)

Tusker, an Indianna Jones off-cut, and Last Ninja 2 a Last Ninja 1 off-cut are the inspirational releases from System 3, a System 2 off-cut? These are some of the earliest screen shots so you don't know how lucky you are.

Release:April

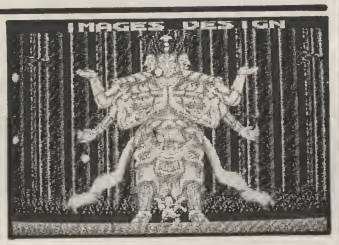


Toyottes (Infogrames)

It looks fun, it looks fandabby dobby, with those clean edged graphics stylishly faded into shades of blues and reds. Yes, YES IT IS, IT'S ANOTHER INFOGRAMES GAME

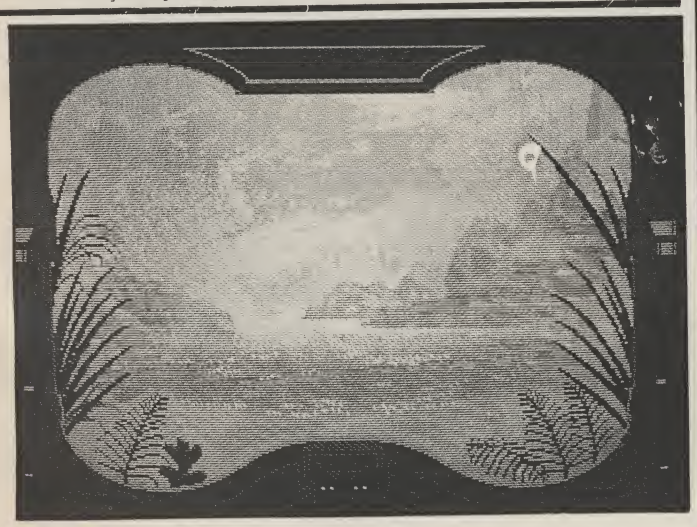
Ninja Spirit (Activision)

Sorry but I can't give you anything else than what Activision say: 'Travel the spine chilling chinese plank, equiped with Samurai sword, Deathstar, dynamite and lassoo razor blade. Dodge the devil spearsmen who will stab you underneath!!...Grapple with nasty ninjas, giant



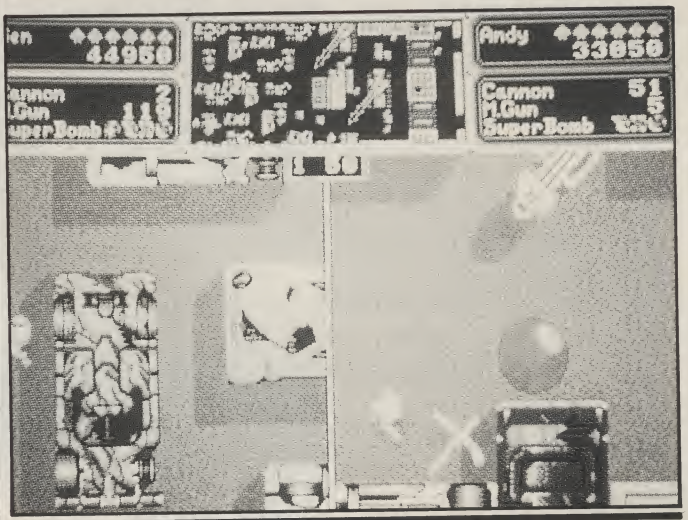
swordsmen, flying kitemen and diving wolves...Will you ever get to the top? Do you have what it takes to confront the Last Warlock?

Due out March.



Crackdown is a two player arcade game where you have to run round a maze of ruins and streets, shoot people and stuff. Once you've planted your three bombs within the time limit then you go to the next level.

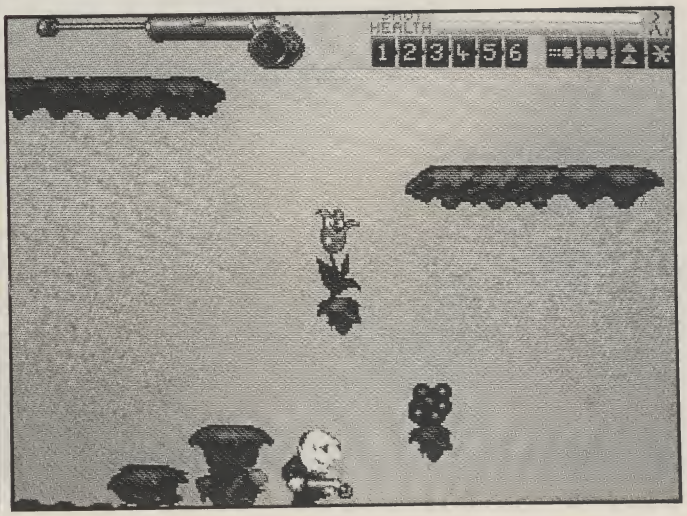
You can have two players one either side of a split screen. If you've got an ST or seen it on the ST then you'll probably like it but if you've got it or seen it on the 64 then it's not going to thrill you a lot.



Dynamic Debugger (Mirrorsoft)

It's still not ready yet! Is there a chance of it ever being ready? It looks great but how long are we going to have to wait for it?





MASTERTRONIC

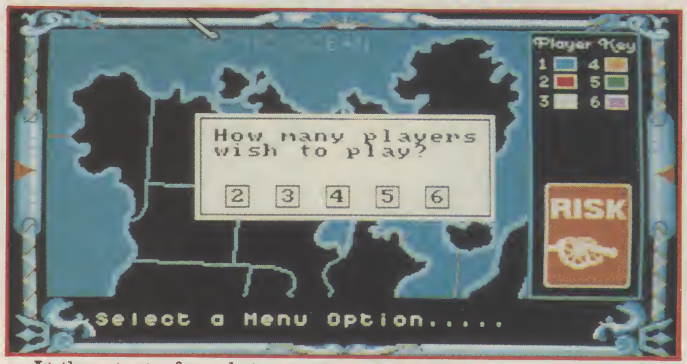


RISK- THE COMPUTER EDITION

Who wants to rule the world? Watch out, because it might be your Amiga...

For anyone who's never played the classic boardgame, Risk will be a temptation. The chance to be sole dictator of the entire world. Hitler had similar plans but any evil association should be forgotten. The game is set in the 17th century and can be played by two to six players. The 'board' is a map of the world divided into continents and the individual territories.

Each player has a designated number of armies. This number varies according to the number of players taking part. The territories are divided equally between the players. Now the armies must be placed one at a time. This lets you develop a strategy without letting the other players have an advantage. There are various things to bear in mind whilst deploying your forces. The larger the army the better chance it will have of winning a battle. As the whole idea of the game is to own territories this is very important.



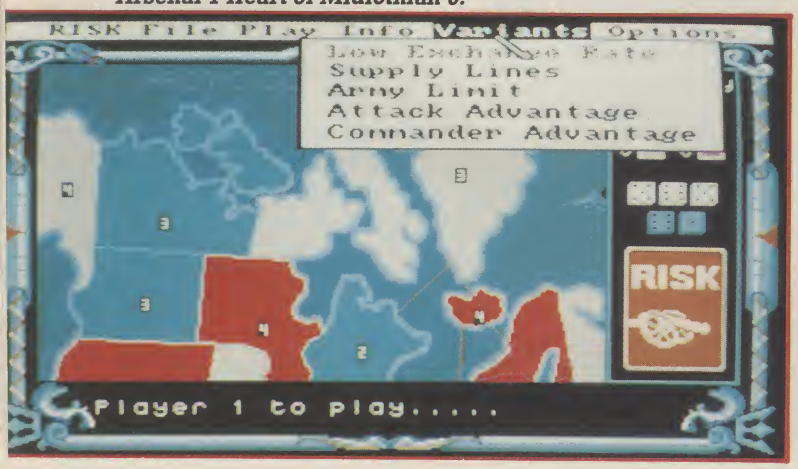
At the start of each turn the number of territories owned is divided by three. The resulting total is the number of reinforcements awarded. Also if a player holds an entire continent there is a bonus number of armies to deploy. This varies depending on the size of the continent from two to seven. Therefore the greater the number of territories owned the more powerful the reinforcements obtained.

A battle can be fought by two opposing armies in adjacent territories. The outcome is resolved by means of a dice rolling system. The attacking player can use up to three dice, the defender a maximum of two. But the defender has the advantage; in the case of a draw on the dice, the defender wins. The dice are thrown and the totals compared. For each win on the dice an army is deducted from the losing side. So a battle can be drawn. If the attacker is reduced to a single army he can no longer attack. Should the defender be reduced to zero the attacker invades.

Risk is a sprawling wargame which has its roots in strategy. However the dice add an element of luck into the proceedings. The computer edition has the advantage of loads of extra options that Risk fans will love. Like the American game, where you can pick your territories, and the statistics like the number of battles won or lost. Fans should put down this magazine and go and buy it. Newcomers who like boardgames should try it out. A fantastic conversion to the small screen. Get it now.

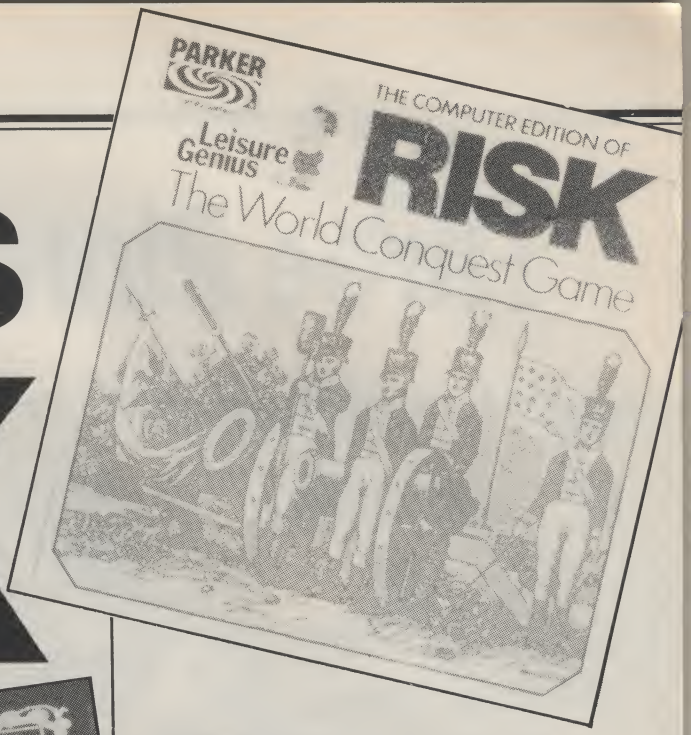
A. Cotter-Cairns

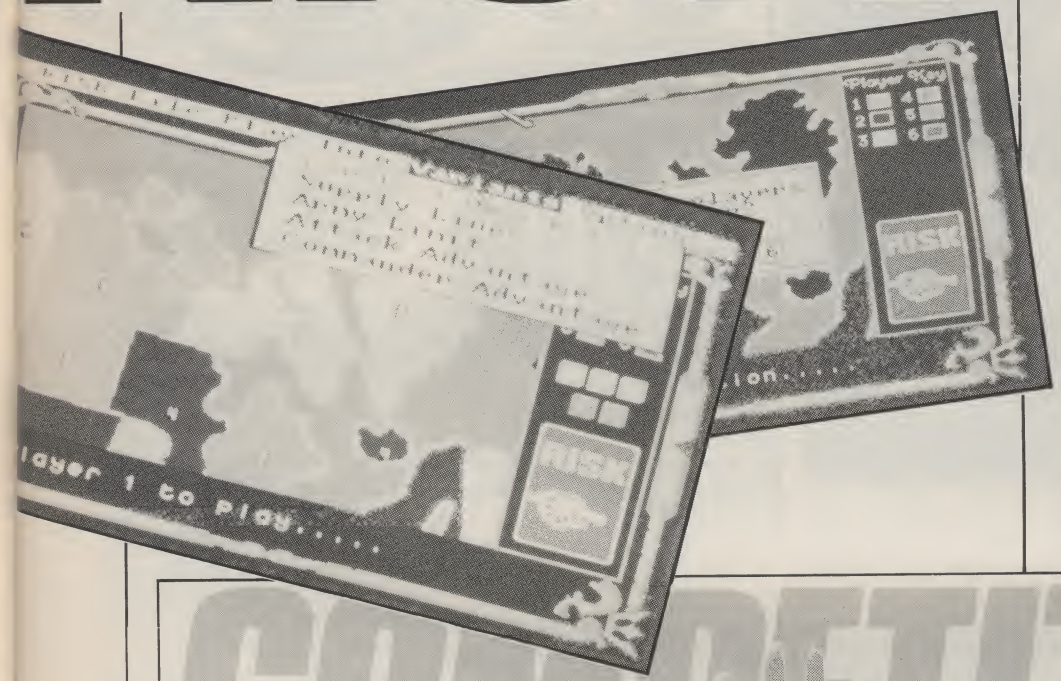
Canadian occupation: I wish I was in Dixie, hooray, hooray; Arsenal 1 Heart of Midlothian 0.



COMPETITION

VIRGIN'S RISK

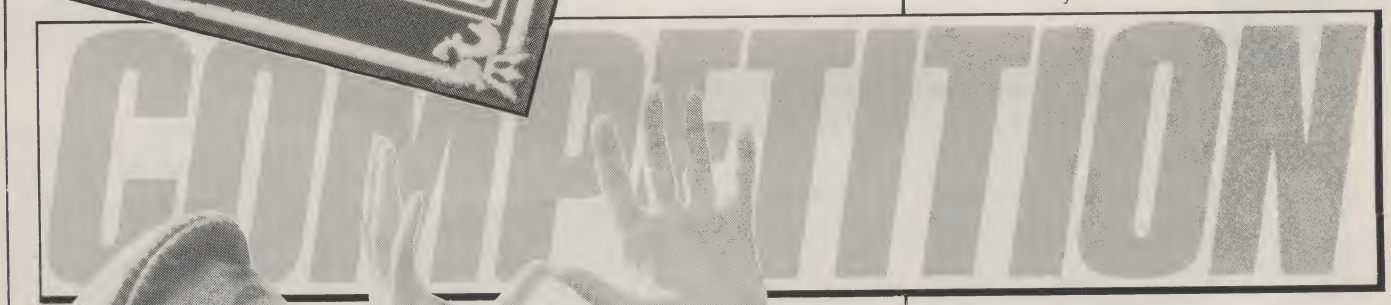


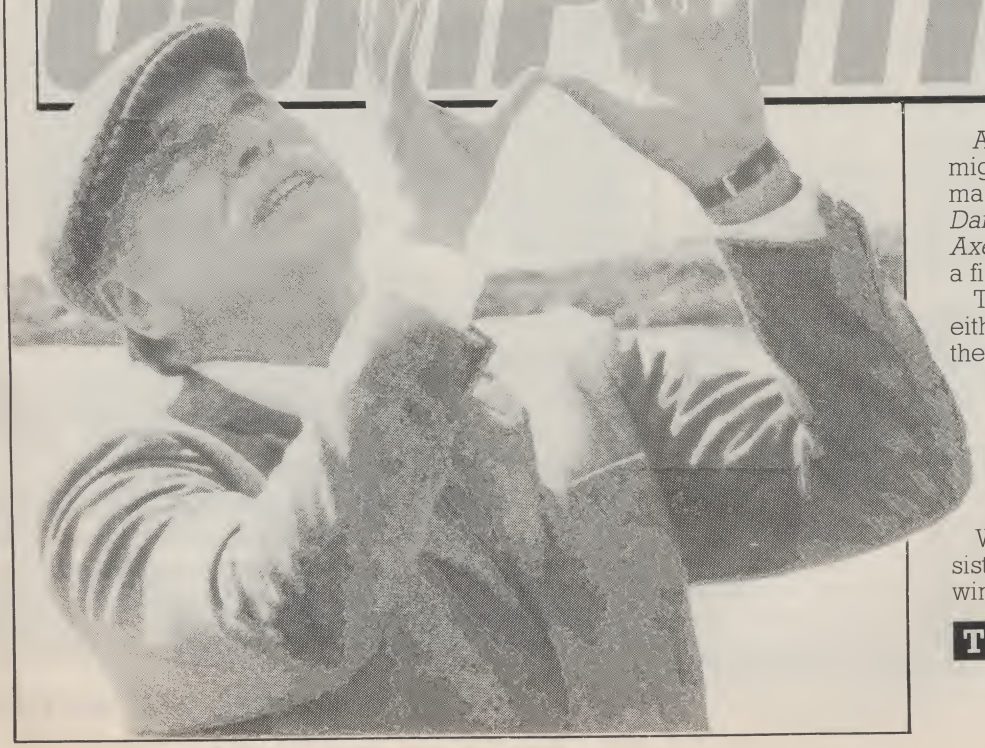


RISK the winner of a Diamond Disk with 96% in this month's Your Amiga is part of another super competition. Your Amiga and Virgin Mastertronic are offering you an enormous mystery prize for answering the simple question.

What was the name of the nurse who served in the Crimean War?

Yes, what an absurd question I hear you say to yourselves. But you should expect that kind of thing from a bunch of guys who collect Indonesian acorns for a hobby.





And that mystery prize? Well, it might just be the 6 most recent Virgin mastertronic Amiga releases: *Dan Dare III, World Cup Soccer, Golden Axe, Quasar, Risk and one other.* That's a first prize.

The next 15 runners up will get either a copy of the board game *RISK* - there are 5 available - and 10 copies of the Amiga game *RISK*.

Entries should be sent on a postcard to Your Amiga **Virgin Risk** by April 30th at Argus House, Boundary Way Hemel Hempstead. HP2 7ST.

Winners will be pulled out of my sister's drawers on 30th April and winners published in July's magazine.

The Central Scrutinizer

Three Pints of Lager and a Pack



CAPTAIN BLOOD

Forget the clones and start up your own intergalactic dating agency.

Decrepit and degenerate you may be but the search for female aliens (and the occasional clone) continues. Only the numbers (accidently split from your being) can halt your degeneration, but to find them you must socialise with some very unsavoury characters.

When orbiting a planet it is not possible to make a personal appearance but the modified Oorxx babies can be remotely controlled and guided to the planet surface. On unprotected planets the flight is easy but when the defences are up a little fancy flying is needed to safely reach the landing sight. Once you've landed, on the correct planet, you encounter the aliens. Conversation takes place via a symbolic language. Using the symbols to communicate you barter for information about the clones.

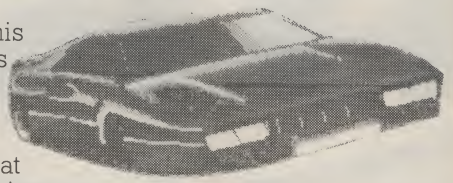
Typical missions can lead to the vaporisation of several planets and introductions to the charming ,to say the least, Ondoyantes. wheedling the information out of the aliens can be a complicated task. However, perseverance and a liberal dose of threats will soon see you zooming through the galaxy to success.

The clone eventually leads to a blood based pool of slime but long before you reach this state Blood gets the shakes therefore making the game much harder to control.

Initiating the planet destruct and hyperspace sequences treats you to a nice fractal display. At the end of the day, though, the mainstay of this program is the interaction with the thirteen alien races and the problems they present to you.

Adrian Pumphrey

NITRO BOOST CHALLENGE



On other formats this game was known as *Super Stuntman* hence the clipboard and the 'great take' comments each time you lose a life.

In your bid to beat the challenge you must navigate some decidedly hostile terrain.

Level 1 is set in the great outdoors where you blast the other cars, helicopters, and hang gliders which impede your progress. The other participants provide nothing more than an annoyance compared to the danger of the natural world. Large chasms must be jumped and screen – splitting earthquakes must be avoided at all costs.

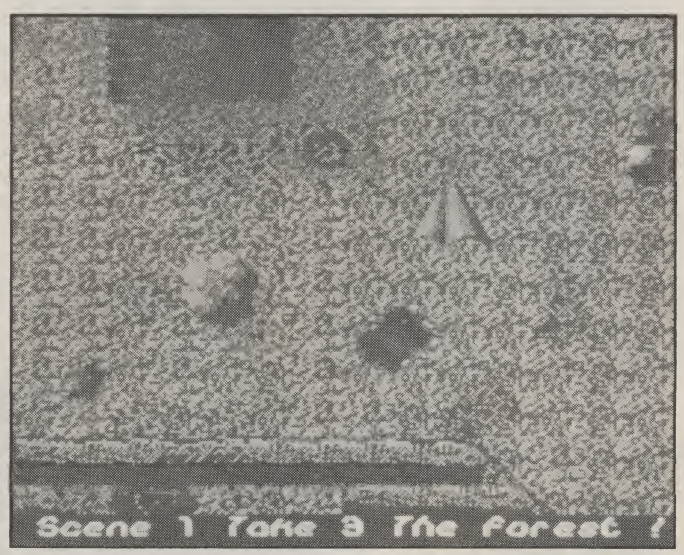
Having pleased the director and reached Level 2 you take to the water in a fully armed speed boat. The old airborne adversaries still dog your progress but the hostile cars are replaced with equally hostile speedboats. The greatest threat to your existence on this level is that of collision. Hitting islands tends to be fatal.

Throughout the game you must avoid the mines and acid puddles which dot the landscape. The only item you want to collide with is the extra turbo boost which is used to get you out of a jam.

Graphically the game is all there but the gameplay lacks a little something.

For the money the game is worthwhile but not one to spend endless hours playing.

Adrian Pumphrey



Drive the road to oblivion with a turbo boost around mines and acid puddles.

cket of Crisps

The Budget Section, about the price of a round in a London pub.

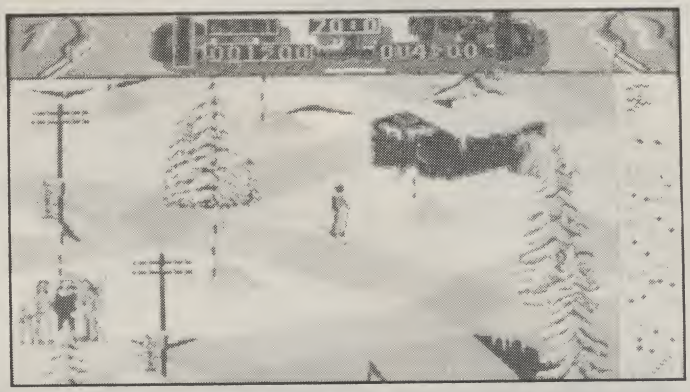


Open the fridge door and let the chill out to build up a little atmosphere and away you go. Hurtle down the 3D representation of the slalom ski slope and collide with as few obstacles as possible. It's against the clock so every second spent eating the snow could prove disastrous.

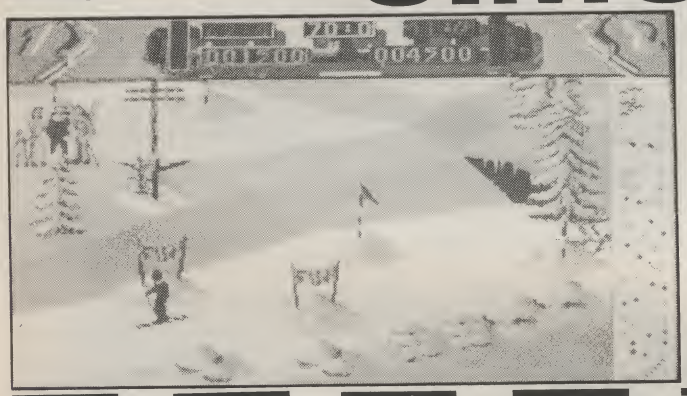
You start the race with a companion but your ineptitude soon opens up the gap. Hitting the mound mounted flag causes a stumble but hitting trees, buildings and the

If you are going to break your leg do it on a simulator

spectators could cost you the race. On the flat sections of the course you have to pump the fire button to get the skier moving but once on the slopes he accelerates at an alarming rate.



ADVANCED SKI SIMULATOR



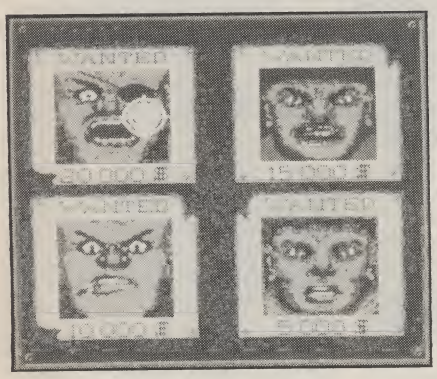
Hit the finishing line before the timer runs out and you make to the next race with an even stricter deadline. As you hurtle down the mountain slope (more wishful thinking) a radar display on the right of the screen alerts you to impending (and hopefully avoidable) collisions.

The two player mode lets two people play simultaneously along with all the associated dirty tricks two players get up to.

The graphics are more than good but the challenge is far from easy. Hitting the slopes in this simulation is fun and a lot cheaper than the real thing.

Adrian Pumphrey

OUTLAW



Stick a bullet in the wanted poster and come out blasting. This vertical scroller takes you back to days were men were men and life was cheap.

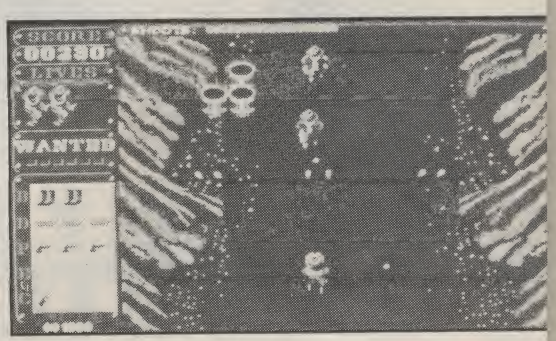
Before wasting the villain and collecting the bounty you have to battle your way through the legions of outlaws. Your 3-way gun lays down the covering fire as hostiles emerge above and adjacent the hero. As the screen fills the carnage begins. For those really tight spots you have a limited amount of dynamite which can be thrown with devastating effect. As you blast you way through the bad guys you will encounter many an obstacle. In the wilds rock falls endanger life but in more civilised climes oil barrels threaten limb. Occasionally a wooden barrel will be encountered. Destroy this and you may be rewarded. Guns, boots, stars, and dynamite boost you speed and blasting power.

Reach the end of the level and you find the bounty laded villain. Unlike other hostiles encountered this guys take some serious blasting.

Survive a level and your boosted hero once again peruses the wanted posters. Four crooks are on the loose each with a successively higher bounty upon their head. Not all bad guys haunt the prairie some prefer the airs of civilisation. Your battle for survival and bounty will takes you through arid desert and deadly rail yards (nothing new have you ever tried a BR sandwich).

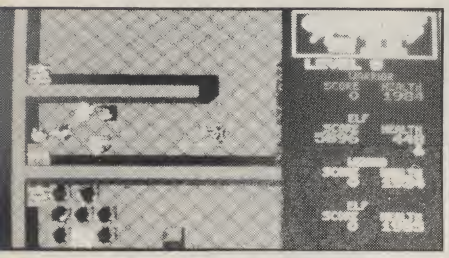
Being a good guy means you can kill lots of people legally

A nice little blast with a western flavour. If the bad guys don't get you the living will.



TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY

Yolk Ho Ho and a bottle of Advocart ... Dizzy the Egg slow cooks on an island paradise.



Dizzy the Egg has got himself into a real mess. He was enjoying an eggstremely relaxing round the world cruise. Unfortunately, he used Captian Silver's spare wooden legs as cricket stumps, and they got lost overboard. Then he had to walk the plank. Being the sort of egg that drowns, Dizzy had little hope of survival. But he somehow scrambled to the shore of a desert island.

This is where we find our hero. Dizzy has to find a way off of the island and back to the Yolk Folk. If he can get rich quick in the meantime then it's all the better. The game is an arcade adventure. There are various items scattered all around the place. They all have a use and Dizzy must utilize them to solve puzzles. His long term aim is to escape the island, but collecting the gold pieces would be nice. There are thirty dubloons in all and collecting them is a second way of completeing the game.

Some of the coins are really deviously hidden and will take some finding. The puzzles are a good mixture of simplicity and difficulty. For example, how can Dizzy get up the cliff face at the start? The answer is a step away. And how can an air breather swim underwater?

The graphics are just amazingly cute. Dizzy bounces around the screen performing somersaults. Leave him standing still and he bounces up and down in an egg like manner. The monsters are straight from a comic book for children, and the backdrops are nice and colourful. If Dizzy makes contact with most of the monsters he loses his only life. Some of the monsters can be useful though!

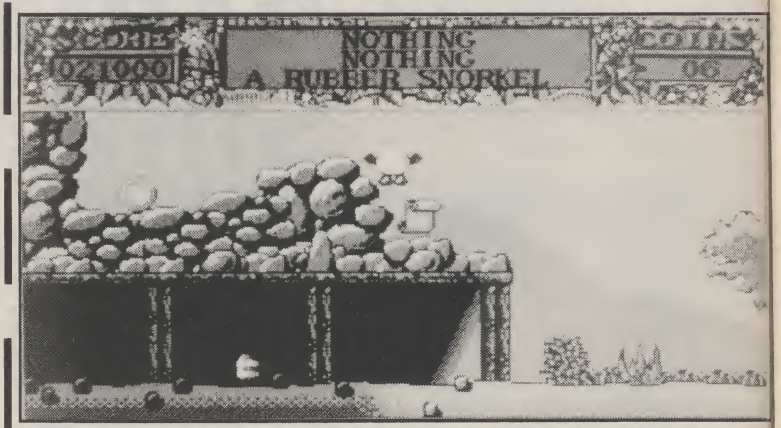
The game may appeal to younger players because of the graphics, but is itself a real challenge. The Yolk Folk will prove extremely difficult to get back to. A nice tune tinkles away behind the gameplay and keeps Yolk seekers happy while they play. If anything the game may be a little too difficult, seeing how it has been pitched at younger players.

Codemasters have hit onto a winner with *Treasure Island Dizzy*. It is a game that anyone could play. The price is nice and arcade adventurers should check it out.

Ashley Cotter-Cairns

GAUNTLET II

The classic arcade 4-player games released on...the KLASSIX label!



Gauntlet II certainly desreves the title Classic. It's predecessor was the most popular game in the arcades when it was released, due partly to it's graphics and gameplay but mostly to the four player option. This meant that the queues for the game were considerably reduced, and that new players could be used as a shield by experienced ones.

Now you can get the game for less than a tenner (about six pints of lager and several packs of crisps). This should make it great value for money - shouldn't it? Unfortunately the game shows it's age somewhat. For a start, the time it takes to load is totally unacceptable. It was over ten minutes before I got started. The game translates fairly well to the home computer format however.

The main problem with the graphics is that they are too small. This is obviously because there is a lot of detail to fit onto the screen at once. Also the programmers have tried to make the graphics too colourful in my opinion. This makes them appear garish and fiddly.



Having said that, the game works quite well. The sound is punchy and quite close to the arcade machine. It is a good attempt at a conversion, but the fact that you need a hardware add on for the four player option is a pain. Still, you can order one while you're waiting for the game to load.

Ashley Cotter-Cairns



HAVE YOU THE RIGHT STUFF TO BE A FULL METAL PILOT ?

FULL METAL PLANETE. 8:54 am. You will have to prove that you are the Cobra Steel Company's best pilot...
Your mission : land your spaceship, get a maximum load of ore, disintegrate or get hold of the precious equipment of the rival companies and, if possible, capture their own spaceship bursting with ore. Under your command a whole steel armada : barges, attack boats, tanks (amongst them the famous T99 known as the "Big Heap"), transporter crabs and the unique "Weather Hen". This extraordinary machine, the technological pride and joy of Ludodelirium Motors & Co., is able to transform the ore into material. Not only that, it also foresses the changing tides. On Full Metal Planete ignoring the rising tide means foolhardiness. How easily your attack boats could get stuck or your tanks flooded in the next turn !


In a previous campaign, this attack boat got stranded on a reef ; now is it abandoned : "The ore goes first !"


Isolated by the high tide, with its defenders neutralized, the "Delirium galaxy" may be your next victim.

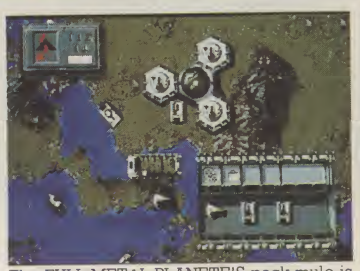

The ultimate flood. Though a turret is destroyed, this space-ship of the TATOU Consortium manages to lift off.




Free game piece enclosed !

It is imperative that you lift off before the Big Flood, announced for the 25th turn... Ground contact in 50 seconds. Welcome on Full Metal Planete ! Action, fights, stategy and diplomacy in a fantastic Sci-Fi world where up to 4 players (humans and robots) affront each other in a thrilling competition.
The computer plays not only the part of e referee but also offers you adversaries who are always available : 6 robot-players each having their own character, but they are all programmed for a sole aim : beating you !
Furthermore this game contains a graphic tool to create your company's blazon and strategical problems for you to solve in order to get trained. A superb adaptation of the board game in the style of the games created by the Cobra Soft team : Bertrand Brocard and Roland Morla.

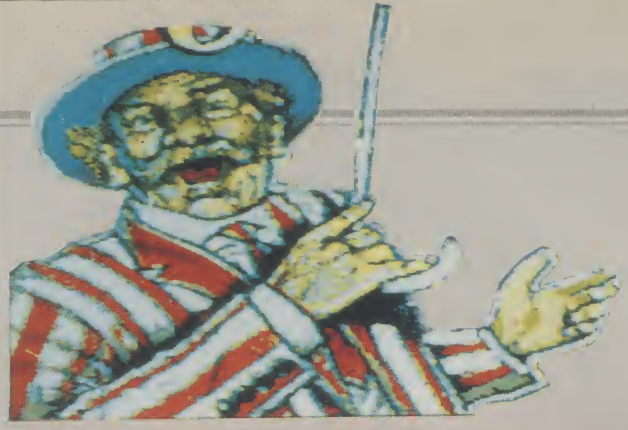

A situation overview appears on the radar screen. Beware of threatening "Black Star" ! What about an alliance ?


The FULL METAL PLANETE'S pack mule is the barge which can transport ore and vehicles.


Stuck in the mud ! This venturesome crab has been surprised by the flood and can only hope for the next low tide.

Available on ATARI ST & STE - AMIGA - PC COMPATIBLES

INFOGRAMES



ELECTRONIC ZOO

SIDESHOW

Roll up, roll up it's all the fun of the fair.

The big top may be the main attraction but it is all too easy to become side tracked by the stalls. Eight stalls test your reflexes, accuracy and stamina as you blast, throw and think you way through this entertainment special. You have two ways to target the cursor. One is with the ever faithful mouse and the other with the Phaser Gun.



Select your ticket (child or adult) and the fun begins. The only difference between the tickets is your starting credits and the restriction of the dunk tank, clock shop and the haunted hill to adult users only. The price of a stall often indicates its difficulty. To complete the game you must beat each stall three times (by earning more tokens than the stall cost) without running out of tokens or having to pop home for a snack.

The cheapest (but not quite the easiest) event is the balloons. Burst these with the darts to reveal the score cards. The cards come in both negative and positive values. Find the pattern in the positive values and you stand a good chance of beating the stall.

The most lucrative event is the balls. Milk churns shoot red and green ball skywards. Blasting anything but the green balls is detrimental to your score.

Around this point in the game time begins to play an important factor. The longer it takes you to either win or lose at a stall the hungrier you will become. The only cure for this is to visit the concession stand where you can fill up on your favourite goodies, for a price.



The haunted hill and the pot pourri both require some serious blasting. In the graveyard things are afoot and best dealt with by a bullet before things get out of hand. Pot pourri is more like the classic duck shoot as you blast the objects travelling across the screen. In this stall shooting the wrong objects means a minus score.

Ringing the balls in the strength contest is hampered by the monkeys which carry a token penalty if shot and the happy go lucky clown in knives is less than pleased if you miss the rapidly changing targets. For the haters of Swiss clocks a little cuckoo shooting is recommended.

The dunk tank holds a surprise. The digitised image you are dunking can be replaced with either a drawing or digitised image of a friend/enemy.

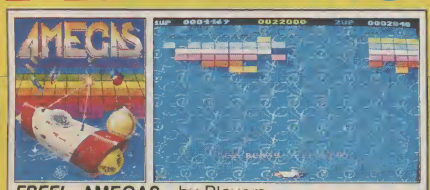
Lots of variety and fun to play even without the light phaser. The stalls are not the only challenge you must face as random events pop-up to tantalise the opportunist player.



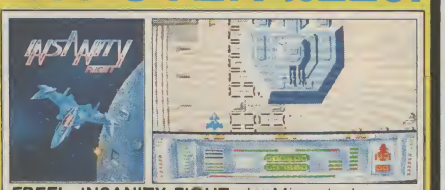
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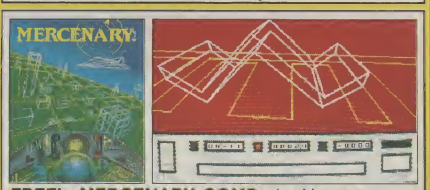
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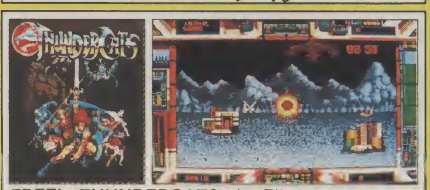
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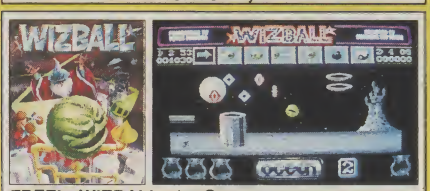
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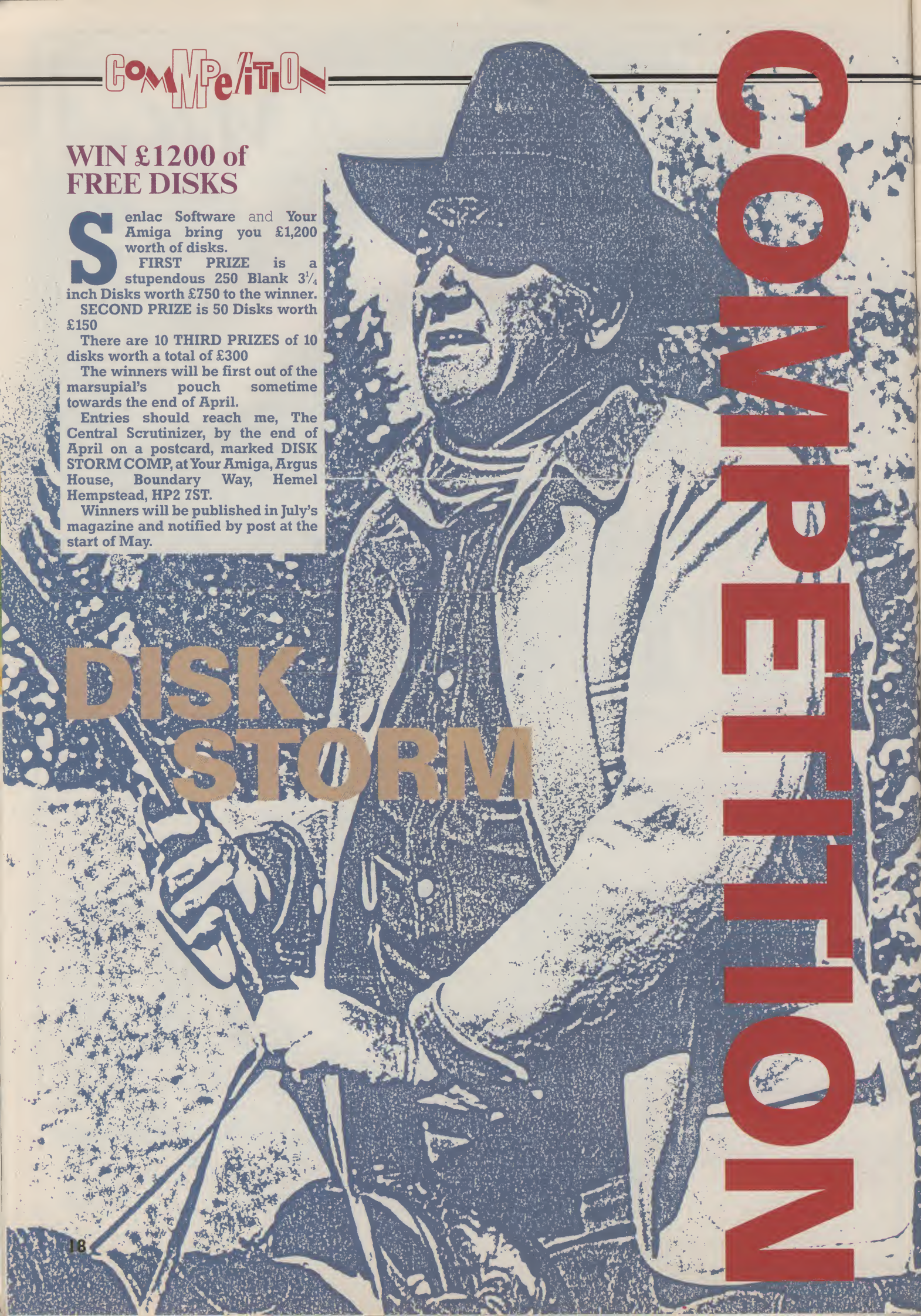
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Entries should reach me, The Central Scrutinizer, by the end of April on a postcard, marked DISK STORM COMP, at Your Amiga, Argus House, Boundary Way, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 7ST.

Winners will be published in July's magazine and notified by post at the start of May.



THE PD COLUMN



Allen Webb follows up last month's column on recent PD software.

One of the irritating aspects to Commodore's approach to marketing the Amiga was that they attempted to sell it as a business machine. Given the established position of the IBM format this was rather a silly approach (not that the Amiga is inferior to the IBM format - just different). Most owners, however, have the need, either genuine or to justify the purchase of an Amiga, to use the machine for serious purposes. PD authors have not been slow in providing the necessary software and there are one or two compilations around. (I will be looking at one of the biggest - Home Office - next month) Softville have put together a small collection of items on APDC 24. This disk contains a bank account manager, a spreadsheet, a shopping list generator and a mortgage handler.

The bank account handler is v1.0 of Hal Carter's Bankn. This version contains all the functions under one master menu unlike the later v1.2. The program is very good (I have now adopted v1.2 for my own use) and performs well. Having opened an account file you create a list of budget items, each with it's own code and an assigned cash limit. Your transactions are entered into the cheque book section which also provides a running current balance. At any time you can obtain a report indicating your expenditures under each budget item with the percentage spend. This enables you to identify budget inconsistencies and take remedial action.

The spreadsheet bears the name visicalc. Whilst you might be forgiven for assuming that it is similar to the original spreadsheet with the same name. Sorry, you're wrong This offering isn't even up to the 8 bit Visicalc of old, in fact I haven't come across a worse spreadsheet. It makes no attempt to use the Amiga's particular capabilites, it's slow and all commands require a typed in instruction. Whilst I am aware that Analyticalc (Fish 104,144 or 176) uses a similar approach, it is vastly more powerful. There are better spreadsheets around than this one.

Homehelp is another Hal Carter offering and is aimed at the member of the family tasked with buying groceries. The idea is that a database of grocery products is created giving details of cost and location within the shop. On any given day you select the items to be purchased and the program prints the shopping list grouping the items according to location within the shop - thereby optimising your task. I am sure that the program functions well although I can see the task of creating a database for every shop which you may frequent as being a bit of a nuisance.

Supermort is, as it's name implies, a program for calculating your mortgage repayments. Being Canadian it assumes you pay in dollars. Enough said.

In reviewing this offering I'm going a little against my rule of only reviewing the best of what I receive. This beast is, however, a little confusing. Apart from Bankn I found it rather weak, but I'm equally sure that the other programs may appeal to some users.

Fish 242 is a collection of programs most of which are programmed by a chap called Jonathan Potter. The odd man out is a game called JAR (Jump and Run). This is a 3D 'PacMan' in which you heroically dash around up and down steps collecting small spherical items. The sad news is that sundry nasties attempt to get you. Since it is written in a combination of C and assembler the game is a little jerky but it is good fun albeit rather tough.

The rest of the disk comprises of a number of handy utilities.

Image-Ed

A pretty cosmic beast that allows you to design piccies in 16 colour resolution and then save them in forms suitable for use as Bobs, Sprites or images for use in AmigaBasic, C or Assembler. It certainly is an improvement over using the AmigaBasic Object editor or graph paper.

FullView

Most people are used to the wonderful text viewers such as More and Less. Well Mr Potter decided that he wanted to be extra clever and has produced an 80 column viewer called FullView. The program comes with a compression routine if you want to save space. WOW!!.

PPrefs

PPrefs is a short antidote to the preferences provided on the Workbench disk. It achieves this goal quite acceptably.

PaletteReq

As implied by its title this item comprises of the C source code for full blown Palette Requestor. All you need to do is graft it to your own C code and off you go. Easy eh?

FileReq

Rather like PaletteReq except for accessing files. It also includes DOS commands.

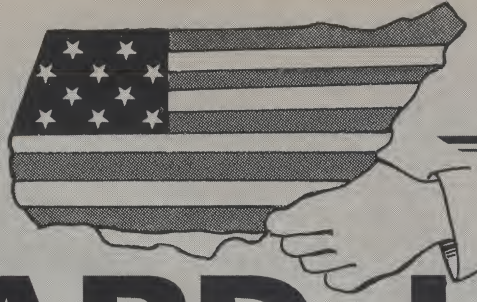
ZeroVirus

I covered this item last month. The program enables you to save bootblocks and thereby protect your priceless disks.

PopInfo, JPClock

Useful information sources telling you about memory usage and giving you the time.

I found this disk a very handy source of utility items all of which were well documented.



WESTWARD, HO

WESTWARD, HO
WESTWARD, HO

Another month, another bunch of North Am new releases: Magic Candle, Strike Force Navigator, Light Division, White Death; Paul Rigby puts on a funny accent.

This month news has reached me of an intriguing new RPG by an American company called **Mindcraft**. The game is called *The Magic Candle*. The story centres around the mysterious disappearance of the guardians which are supposed to be guarding the eternal flame of the Magic Candle. The same flame that is holding the arch-demon, Dreax, prixoner (yes, that flame). But, no guardians, no candle. It has started to melt. Once the candle is gone so will the land of Deruvia. You know the sort of thing, mass destruction, blood, guts, rabid ST owners...

The viewpoint onto the gameworld of *The Magic Candle* is looking from an oblique angle giving a 3-D effect. It promises 54 dungeon levels, six towns, six villages, two castles, 25 different monsters, 24 spells, 40 commands and 25 player characters. This will be volume one so a series is, evidently, planned. The PC version has already been released with the Amiga version to follow shortly. When it's available you can expect a review.

Advantage Ace, a new outfit residing in Minnesota, have produced a rather strange device for all of you flight-sim fanatics. For the pilot with everything they present – *Strike Force Navigator*! It is a circular piece of plastic with a handle attached. Giving the overall impression of being potentially useful to prepare your pancakes on. The circular disk has a variety of concentric rings with compass bearings on them. The upshot being that you can plot your course to that SAM site or enemy concentration. Of course, it could also be used for tank sims, sub sims, and so on. The handle is bent to allow you to place the device directly onto the screen. More news and pics soon.

Written by an ex-door gunner on H34s (the American version of the Westland Wessex helicopter) during Vietnam, 3W have announced that *Light Division* will shortly be released on the Amiga. *Light Division* take you to the Middle East. Iran has closed the Straits of Hormuz and President Bush has sent in the 29th Light Division. Your mission is to open the Strait, keep it open, and fend off attacks from Iranian and, possibly, Soviet forces – all in an effort to keep the oil flowing.

Talking about strategy games, **Command Simulations** have told me about their new incarnation of a PC original called *White Death*. Set in November 1942 the winter offensive is about to begin. Before that actually happens the vital Vitebsk-Leningrad railroad must be cut. Two, under-strength, German divisions guard this area. Cue one bitterly fought battle.

The game features six scenarios, full colour graphics with digitised sound, rockets, weather effects, supply variations, unit identification, morale and so on.

"A Bass Fishing Simulation – you've got to be joking."

RATINGS – THE WHOLE STORY

This column covers adventures, RPGs and strategy (three games categories with fundamental differences).

Adventure Ratings

Presentation: Graphics (quality, relevance, atmosphere conveyed)? Packaging? User interface?
Encounters: – with other characters and the parser quality.
Atmosphere: Quality of the storyline? Does it make you feel involved?
System: Puzzle quality? How the whole game hangs together (Does the game consist of hours of boredom with few minutes of excitement)? Bug-ridden? Spelling mistakes?
Rating: Take from the above ratings.

RPG Ratings

Attribute: Choice of different races? Character complexity? Amount of skills, etc available.
Combat: Combat system. Magic System.
Presentation: Graphics. Presentation. Interesting game world? Organisation of screen information.
Atmosphere: Involved storyline?
Encounters: Quality of parser, if any. Depth of interaction with characters?
Rating: Taken from above ratings.

Strategy Ratings

Presentation: Packaging, Graphics, Organisation of screen information.
Intelligence: Quality of artificial intelligence.
Atmosphere: Involved? Good historical or scene setting information?
Combat: Quality of combat system.
System: Does the game have you on the edge of your seat or does it involve hours of tedium? Bugs? Do different game features hang together?
Rating: Taken from above.



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All the way from the USA is a Bass Fishing simulation from Interstel, who may be more familiar to you as produces of *Star Fleet 1* and *Empire*. *Reel Fish'n* was written by Roger Damon, well known for his SSI wargames such as *Fild Of Fire* and *Wargame Construction Set*.

Reel Fish'n begins with you selecting the day, according to the projected weather forecast, for your fishing. The weather, of course, having an effect upon your final catch. Afterwards you retire to the kitchen. Clicking on various items in the room you can examine the up-to-date weather forecast, view the available lakes where you will fish, the cost to get there, projected quality of Bass fish, read a weekly fishing tip and then enter the tackle shop.

At the tackle shop you may purchase a variety of lures which include Surface Plugs, Crank Baits, Bottom Bouncers and Specials. In addition you may purchase superior boats, maintenance kits and depthfinder equipment. Available cash is the limiting factor here. Your daily job will provide some funds but the big money is only available from entering fishing tournaments which you can do at any time.

After selecting your lake the screen changes to an overhead view of the boat, as well as a small side-view of the shore. From here you can sail to your required swim, drop anchor, select your lure, select fast or slow reel and cast. The latter is done by clicking on the required area outside of the boat. A white line will run from the boat to the area you clicked on. A small window shows what's going on under the surface. When a Bass darts up to the lure and takes it you must strike. All reel and rod actions are mouse controlled. Normally, the larger the fish the more you must "play" him. This part of the simulation is, understandably, the most exciting. Your catch is automatically weighed and stored in a "live well". All of this taking place amongst the sampled dounds of nature – most relaxing.

Reel Fish'n is an excellent attempt at simulating Bass fishing. While it is not a perfect simulation, no groundbait feature for example, it is still a worthy attempt which I can thoroughly recommend.

Paul Rigby

STRATEGY RATINGS

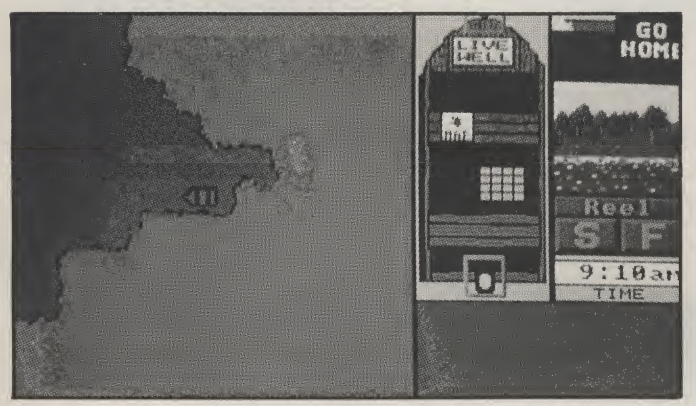
Presentation — **83**

Atmosphere — **85**

Combat — **N/A**

System — **86**

Rating — **84**





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Feature

WOMEN ON SCREEN



Gallery Art Alternative

Debs in the Office

Women in computing? They wouldn't know the back end of a bus from the front end of a gender bender.

'Ah - hello - could I speak to somebody about your software? - so you're not the secretary then!'

A blonde on a dumb terminal showing a bit of Jackson structure. Just telephone so-and-so and just type this letter for me, you're so much better at typing than me. (How about writing and spelling too?)

'You actually write the programs?' I might wear a skirt, have a tidy desk, organize my work well, but what's the betting I get promotion later and have to work that much harder to be recognized.

'Is there anyone else I could speak to?'

Would you like me to switch the printer on for you? 'I'm sure you'll never spot the bright orange button so cleverly sporting ON/OFF. It's not that I'm chauvinist or anything.'

Less experience, less proven ability but more money. Find me that potted plant. 'Are you sure you're not the secretary?'

Nano Nano

PORN SOFTWARE

HARD CORE porn is available to children from software dealers that do not check out the age of mail order customers. The explicit material takes the form of digitised and animated "slide shows", mainly running on IBM PC compatible computers.

This shock fact came to light when journalists from *Popular Computing Weekly* made a sample purchase from one company, Castle Software of Stoke (Readers shold note that therre are two Castle Softwares in Stoke, the other being a more conventional company), which has been advertising "shareware with a difference" in the computer press.

In an intentionally untidy handwritten letter, we asked for two of Castle's so-called "Adult Fun Packs", enclosing payment in the form of a £14.65 postal order.

No attempt was made at any time to ensure that we were over 18 – despite the fact that the advertisement, in a magazine called *Computer Shopper*, declared the fun packs to be for "adults only".

Shortly afterwards we were mailed a brown paper parcel containing nine 5.25 in. PC discs. These contained a variety of digitised images and animation sequences depicting a variety of sexual acts that in the normal run of events would have been awarded an "18" certificate at the very least.

This is an extract from an article that first appeared in Popular Computing Weekly.

Gallery Art Alternative

Jennifer Redpath – Ranting Fury

There are already established stereotypes connected with computing: on the one hand, games played by spotty, bespectacled youths with buckteeth and anoraks; on the other, besuited business executives entrenched in the jargon-filled world of high tech.

And Women? But there's Word Processing.

Is this due to females being prevented from involvement because of the sort of influences and prejudices a predominantly male industry creates or lack of effort from women to get themselves involved?

Whatever the reasons, one of the strongest arguments must surely be that of alienation; schools, workplaces and the industry as a whole coming in for criticism.

Is it any wonder that women appear unattracted to anything but the very basics of computers, when they face constant reminders in the form of advertising and packaging, of what their primary function is, i.e. to sell products using the most marketable asset they possess, their sexuality, from certain areas of the computing world.

With ideas like 'software for girls' policies springing up from some of the larger companies, there seems to be a concerted effort to actively involve women in computers in many different forms.

The more female involvement, and subsequent influence in computing, the more progress will be made towards them becoming genuine participants in the industry.

Rant On

WHO CARES ABOUT SEX, ANYWAY?



Ask anyone to describe a computer boffin and see what they come up with. A spotty teenager with no girlfriend spending endless nights sweating over his keyboard instead? Bespectacled, shy Clark Kent type waiting to be coaxed out of his shell? Crazy scientist unable to relate to human companions but great with a silicon chip? The spitting image of Clive Sinclair?

There are only two things all these weird and wonderful computer cliches have in common. One's a morbid fascination with circuit boards and all things electronic. The other is so obvious you probably haven't noticed it. Not one of them is a woman. Why?

The answer, like it or not, is that computing is dominated by men. Most key members of the industry are male - from the big names like Jack Tramiel and Alan Sugar right down to Joe Bloggs the sales assistant at your local branch of Games-U-Like. Most computer games are bought by boys. The mags they read have a target audience that's usually over 95% male. Most of them are edited by men.

With the exception of PR - about the only computer orientated environment in which women have approximate parity with men - most of the computing jobs which more women than men tend to do are the ones which require less technical knowledge. Obviously there are exceptions, but more often than not you'll find it's your mum or your sister

Blue Metal Girl by Junior Tomlin.

Kati Hamza, a real-live jive-talking girl, breathes down the necks of ugly mugs and scary creeps.

who's more likely to be the word processor operator and your dad or your brother who gets to be the systems analyst.

Not that the computer industry shuns the female form. Far from it. Women have their own special function when it comes to promotions and advertising. Visit any computer show and you're bound to find a few long-legged lovelies in mini-skirts handing out leaflets. Take a look at a selection of adverts and you'll find more than your fair share of buxom nymphettes busting out of their scanty bikinis, grinning inanely and tottering on six-inch heels. So far the games industry has shown that it's far more interested in twanging a girly's bra strap than testing her brains.

But if it's true to say that computing isn't a field exactly overpopulated by techno-literate members of the female gender, it's just as clear that no-one's obviously trying to keep them out. Nowadays girls have exactly the same opportunities as boys at school. Most kids leave school computer literate and as computing doesn't make any great physical demands on the human body there's really no reason why little Kylie, say, shouldn't grow up to be a systems analyst earning just as much money as little Jason hopes to do.

Or is there? Sandra Vogel, founder of the Organisation Against Sexism in Software (OASIS) reckons that there are a variety of much subtler influences working to keep women and computers apart. Girls may have plenty of computing opportunities but they're often conditioned to think that programming, like Metalwork or Maths, is something they probably won't be good at. Some teachers don't expect girls to opt for computing so they may not have enough confidence to try it out.

In Neighbours, Charlene caused a major outrage when she wanted to be a mechanic. If she'd wanted to be a computer engineer her reception in some families would have been the same.

Boys on the other hand, are more often positively encouraged to spend as much time playing around with keyboards and joysticks as they want. At Christmas time it's likely to be Jason, not Kylie, who gets given the Speccy.

As for games, how many times have you rushed to your local arcade only to find six girls hogging the Hard Drivin' machine or arguing about who scored what on R-Type? Not likely, you might say - girls just don't like that sort of game. But could it be that they're just put off by the presentation? Linda Wright, author of several adventure games including The Jade Stone and her own PBM, Arcania, blames adverts and the overall packaging. 'The images they use are aimed at the male side of the population and put women off.' There's the scenario for a start. Most game plots are about as original as sin and a lot less varied. If the one which has you rescuing your careless cutey pie girlfriend from Mr Big is enough to bore most male gamesplayers comatose it's hardly likely to tempt the average female into action.

Few games follow the examples set by *Alien Syndrome*, *Sword of Sodan* and *Barbarian II* in giving you the chance to play a female character. You're more likely to get praise for being the strongest or the fastest man in the world. Even if you do get a token female champion, it's usually not a good idea to play her because she's probably weaker and takes fewer hits - not surprising considering the totally impractical fur bikini she's usually required to wear.

As for the gameplay itself, most women gamers I spoke to are pretty happy with things just as they are. Christina Erskine, a former member of the Popular Computing Weekly editorial team, insists that she doesn't prefer any particular genre. 'All I want from a game is that it's well-implemented with some originality and depth. Whether I play a shoot 'em up or an arcade adventure just depends on my mood. I wouldn't say I have any particular preferences simply because I'm a woman'. Linda Wright agrees, 'There's no need to design patronising embroidery programs. A lot of women actually enjoy war games, shoot 'em ups and especially puzzles. It's just that there's usually very little on the cover of a game to encourage them to buy it.'

In fact, quite often what you will find on the cover doesn't just put women off - it causes them offence. Controversial campaigns like *Barbarian*, *Psycho Pigs UXB*, and *Vixen* have used women in provocative Page 3 style poses to sell their games. You may think it's all a bit of harmless fun. OASIS and others insist that this kind of promotion only reinforces damaging sexual stereotypes and contributes to the alienation of women from computers. The idea is that by portraying a female as if her mammaries are a lot more important than her grasp of Read Only Memory, in this kind of ad does nothing to promote equality and everything to suggest that the only thing a girl is good for is sex. Forget brains, forget intelligence and forget computer

The hassled secretary, computer adorned with toys and flowers and layers of Laura Ashley marquetry, is about as close as many women get to working with computers – VDU inputting and WP.





View from The Heavens – Sometimes the men come ten feet tall.

literacy.

Whatever the reasons, girls and computers don't always mix. Your local computer shop and your average arcade are still likely to be crowded with boys, boys and more boys. On the other hand, as the computer industry's growing up, a few people are starting to wonder whether there isn't a great untapped female market waiting somewhere out there. Women make up 51% of the population - get just half as many girls as boys interested and in theory every game you produce should sell half as much again.

"Nowadays girls have exactly the same opportunites as boys at school."

A few software houses, like **Audiogenic** and **The Edge**, have declared a policy of producing unisex games and page 3 style ad campaigns aren't as frequent as they used to be. Even so there are going to have to be a lot of changes to education and attitudes before you're going to find as many Kylies as Jasons thumping their way through R-Type 5. Still, ten years ago the home computer was practically unheard of - by the year 2000 we might all be clamouring for the latest releases from the likes of **Andrea Braybrook, Stevie Turner** and **The Bitmap Sisters.**

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

Peter Calver - Audiogenic

'Quite frankly, apart from a few individuals hardly anyone seems interested. I've written to magazines and been on the radio talking about getting more girls interested in games and there's been virtually no response.'

Linda Wright - Marlin Games

'When I've spoken to some women about computers they treat them as if they're something mysterious and wouldn't know what to do with one.'

Christina Erskine - journalist

'I don't think generalisations like 'boys like shoot 'em ups and girls like cute arcade adventures' are all that helpful. A lot of girls enjoy R-Type and a lot of boys play Super Mario Brothers.'

Sandra Vogel - OASIS

'Male computer users are obviously in the majority but I still think there are more female users than is generally believed. There's usually more than one household member using a computer even if it does tend to be the men and the boys who buy the software and answer the questionnaires. A lot of those hidden users are probably women.'

GAMES FOR GIRLS?

VIXEN - less than mediocre arcade game given prominence by the inclusion of a full-size poster of Corinne Russell (plus whip) in the packaging.

BARBARIAN & BARBARIAN II - Miss Whitaker's pectorals were the obvious selling point here though **Palace** received so much stick about sexism the first time around, they made a point of including an option to actually play Maria in *Barbarian II.*

PLUNDERED HEARTS - Swashbuckling **Infocom** adventure which attempted to exploit the female market using the story of a 17th Century heroine and her passion for a pirate. It got mixed reviews, especially as most of the in-depth gameplay was just a matter of making simple choices.

PACMAN - No women, no men and not much violence. Is this a prime example of the unisex game? In market terms, it's estimated that just as many men as women played it...

EDITORIAL NOTE

Obviously **Your Amiga** would like to hear from any women readers or groups of women readers or groups of women or groups of men and women or. generally anyone with absolutely anything to say about this issue.

I've mentioned before now the amount of material we've had for the **Your Amiga Gallery** that is soft porn. All the images of naked people, that we have received, have been of women, one of them actually by a woman. So far we haven't used any of them even though a couple were artistically very creditable. I don't like to offer judgements on art but I will not put material in the magazine that could be tasteless or damaging. Marginal issues are usually resolved very quickly. On the games front, an obviously violent, not only sexist game, will not get editorial coverage. Even with the present government's shading of the laws over pornographic representation in art, artistic licence should not be the only whipping boy or in the other hand the only saint.

The problem with this is that it depends on an incomplete hypothesis of what could be tasteless or likely to cause damage. This matter might resolve itself over the next few months especially if i get some more art and letters from women readers and women owners of computers.

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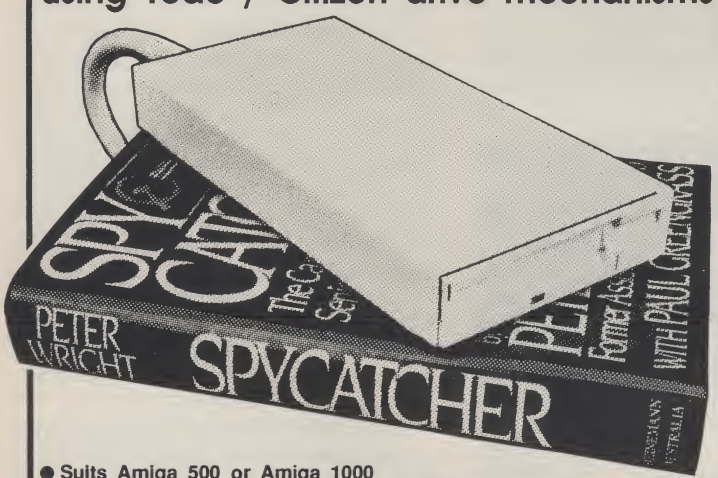
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Oasis ~ They Came from the Desert

Organised Crime needs organised needs.. needs watching

The media is full of watchdogs. There's the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, Mary White-house, The Advertising Standards Association, The Press Council, That's Life... a veritable kennel-full of Rottweilers, in fact. So far, the software industry's relatively low profile has managed to escape much of the scrutiny. Not any more. For over a year now, 25-year-old Sandra Vogel, founder of OASIS, has been trying to change all that.

For 'OASIS' read 'Organisation Against Sexism In Software'. It's run on a shoestring from Sandra's flat in South London, and for an annual fee of £3 its members receive a monthly news-letter inclusive of a booklist and a selection of recommended non-sexist software.

The only group of its kind in Britain, its main concerns are with gender stereotyping in leisure software and the kind of sexist, bimbo-ette advertising that lavishly adorns so many games. Inevitably, because its members have such different backgrounds, OASIS has been known to dabble in other areas, like business software, as well.

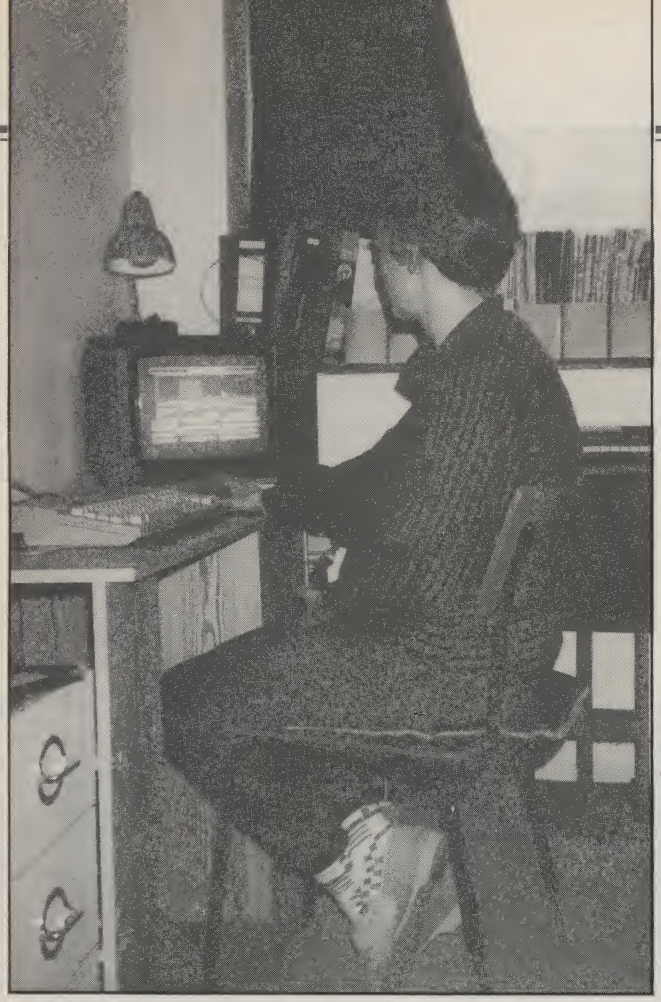
The games industry is famous for many things, licences, arcade conversions, violence - to name just a few. But feminism isn't one of them. So what persuaded Sandra, who's a Research Fellow at the Centre for Communications and Information Studies in London, to try and make a dent in this male-dominated environment in the first place?

"Almost two years ago now I saw an ad for a thing called *Strip Poker II* which was the straw that broke the camel's back. I decided to do something about it then and there."

A letter she wrote to the magazine involved generated enough interest to form what was initially a very informal group. After that, it was a fairly small step to setting up something a little more official.

Anyone who thinks that issues like that only interest extremist Millie Taunt types are in for a shock. Sandra is quick to point out that the term has become associated with so many cliches that it's hard to be a feminist nowadays. In fact, in her casual tracksuit and slippers, washing draped over the furniture in the living room, she couldn't





Sandra at the computer.

have contrived to look less like a sexy sexual stereotype.

The organisation's members aren't what you'd term hard-line extremists either. 'Once the group was formed, parents, teachers, students, journalists and programmers signed up in support. They're not all women either. A large chunk of OASIS membership is male.

Notable supporters include Glyn Kendall, who converted the ST version of Alien Sundrome, Linda Wright, author of several adventure games including The Jade Stone (never released for the Amiga), and Ian Eveleigh who wrote the 8-bit Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. The youngest is an 8-year-old girl, a big fan of Tetris. '– if she can be a feminist at 8, I think that's very encouraging.'

It won't have escaped your notice that none of these are exactly the most famous of industry names, but then OASIS is primarily a consumer organisation and it's the stock attitudes of the industry's bigwigs that it's trying to change.

So what exactly are they complaining about?

"Mostly, advertising. I object to the whole gender stereotyping thing and I think it's important to realise that not just women suffer from it. Macho male images can be just as limiting."

Major culprits so far have included the notorious *Psycho Pigs UXB* ad - **US Gold** got their knuckles firmly rapped by the Advertising Standards Authority over that one - as well as Vixen, Barbarian and, more recently, Astaroth. Over the latter, WH Smith agreed. They refused to carry material featuring **Hewson's** provocative picture of the Angel of Death.

But isn't she just getting it all out of proportion? What's really wrong with a nice pair of breasts and the odd wisp of pubic hair? Isn't OASIS just out to stop people's fun?

"I know a lot of people think that and in a sense there's not much I can do about it. It's a bit like talking to OASIS members, only at the other extreme - they're already convinced.

All I can say to people like that is that they should just think about what they're saying and look around them. If you think it's just good clean fun, take a look at how men are treated in advertising and the kind of roles they're given to play. Is that really what you want to be? It's very constricting, though at least the men's roles are positive. Women's roles are usually defined in terms of what men want them to be rather than what they might want to be.

Sexist software is only a small part of what's going on across the whole spectrum. It's connected with the way women are treated in society as a whole and it's about the way we view women all the time, in all of our lives: television, radio, the rest of the media as well.

For example, people tend to accept that boys are more technically minded and interact with computers more intensely than girls. Too many educationalists think these differences are somehow natural and don't do anything about it. Women are actively encouraged to be technophobic."

As an example, Sandra cites her mum. She's just started to do a word-processing course and is thoroughly enjoying it. But making the decision was a bit like deciding to take a car maintenance course.

It's something very unusual for a woman to do, so it's something you really have to think about. I just wish she'd had the chance ten years ago.'

But isn't all this just an elaborate way of justifying old-fashioned attitudes? Isn't an objection to scantily-clad bodies or the odd stray nipple a sure sign of being a prude not a feminist?

Sandra disagrees.

"OASIS isn't just about getting rid of Strip Poker games or Maria Whitaker. It's not 'Oh my god, that woman's not wearing much, cover her up immediately,' - it's not a Mary Whitehouse campaign. It's about trying to make people think a bit more about how men and women are being used and the kind of things they're being influenced to do.

In fact, OASIS has only been directly involved in trying to get one advert



Women in art: good art or pretty face? or both?

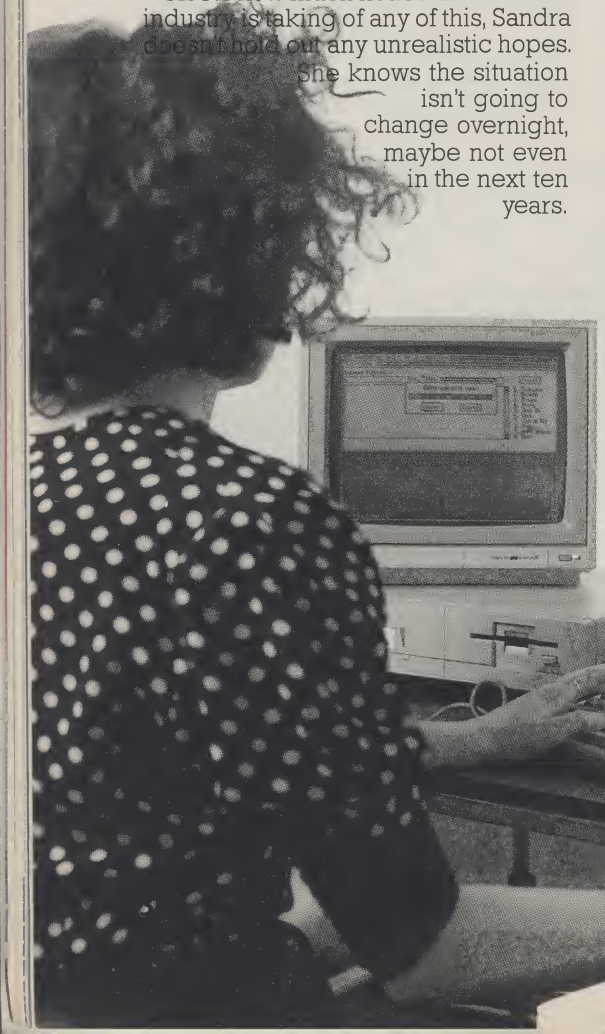
banned. We can't mention it as it's in the hands of the ASA at the moment, though suffice to say that it was for a piece of business software and had nothing at all to do with games.

Sandra emphasises that this was an exceptional case. OASIS didn't set out to act like a big bloke with a truncheon - it was never intended to be a police force.

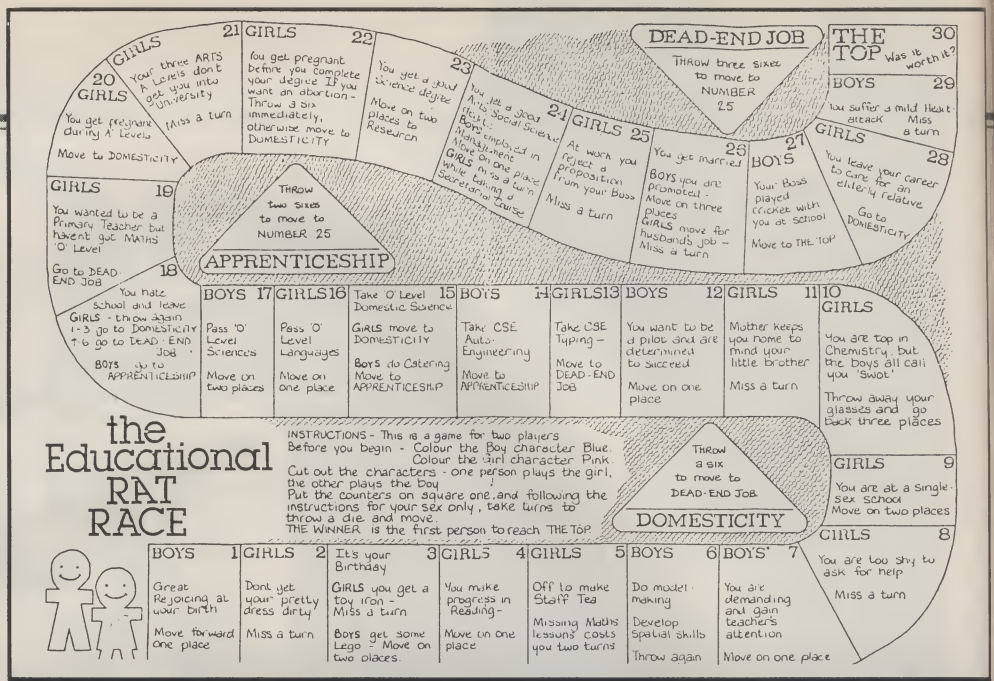
"Censorship is very subjective. The long-term aim has to be self-censorship and that doesn't mean OASIS or anybody else telling the industry what to do. On the other hand, there are always going to be individual situations where advertisers or promoters go over the top."

In any case, Sandra feels that nudity, soft porn, Page 3 and so on cease to become an issue when total equality has been achieved. (**It doesn't matter who's being exploited as long as everyone is ? Ed.**) "You can enjoy as many models as you like - topless, bottomless, in any kind of gender combination - when both sexes are able to enjoy it on exactly the same kind of footing. At the moment they're not, because women don't have equal rights. That's why 'you only ever get to play strip poker against a female and the hand holding the cards is always male. Mind you, there are rumoured to be male strip poker data disks..."

As for how much notice the software industry is taking of any of this, Sandra doesn't hold out any unrealistic hopes. She knows the situation isn't going to change overnight, maybe not even in the next ten years.



At the desk! What chance do women have to go one better?



CONTACTS:
NATIONAL WOMEN AND COMPUTING NETWORK and MICROSYSTER, **Wesley House, Wild Court, LONDON WC2**

Women and Computing produces a bi-monthly women only newsletter and gives its members the chance to join the Network, a database covering women's interests and skills. Microsyster is aimed at providing computing services for women and women's groups. Neither admits men.

WOMEN INTO COMPUTING
C. Goble, Department of Computing, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13

Devised by Women Into Computing based at Manchester University, the rat race is designed to stimulate discussion and awareness of sexual differences. Play it and see.

Set up to encourage women into computing careers and courses, especially at the further education level.
WOMEN AND TECHNOLOGY NETWORK
Alternative Technology Group, Faculty of Technology, Open University, Milton Keynes, Bucks

"Progress is being made but it's very slow. In some ways I think we're actually going backwards. Because we're all supposed to be so enlightened nowadays, the general idea is that equality has already been achieved, so there's nothing to worry about." As a result the kind of stereotypes we thought we'd got rid of (women staying at home or bimbo secretaries) are creeping back. "The new morality, with its emphasis on the return to family values, mothers in the home and so on, is bringing back a lot of damaging ideas."

Strictly in the software field, she admits to a few advances. **Kubernesis,** a company which deals mainly in serious software has got a considerable amount of publicity through OASIS and has developed a strong non-sexist policy in its mailing lists - they've even produced a flyer about it. Most games producers have been a lot more reluctant to follow suit.

One group of people from whom Sandra hadn't expected a response was the retailers. In fact, both Boots and WH Smith have objected to various promotions, notably *Vixen* and Astaroth. It's hardly had a cataclysmic effect on the industry so far but at least it gives the subject some publicity. "I'd like to see them do some more of it."

Apart from that, the game scenarios the software companies spit out year after year haven't exactly had a facelift. OASIS is convinced a whole lot more could be happening and the changes needn't be drastic.

"I'd like to see a lot more variety in software, a lot less of the 'go off and rescue somebody' routines. What I don't want to see is role-reversal 'Oh look, here's a female person who can go off and rescue a male person type of thing' because I think that's almost as bad."

Changes could be as basic as providing the chance to choose between a male or a female sprite. "I think that's very simple to program despite what the software houses say about it. We're getting quite a lot of games, ranging from racing games to sports sims, where you can choose what colour clothes you wear, what colour your bike is and what your name is, and if we

can do all that then I don't think it should be impossible to let you pick between a man and a woman.'

She remembers with nostalgia one of the first games she ever played on her 48K Speccy - *Ant Attack*. It allowed you to choose what sex you wanted to be and the sex of the person you had to go off and rescue. "If they could represent different genders back in the days when sprites weren't much more than stickmen, why can't they do it now?"

As for games which do feature female characters but give them different capabilities, for example, they're clever but not very strong. Sandra considers them just another form of stereotyping.

"The role-playing games I enjoy best are the ones where you can select your own characteristics, so if you want to have a woman who can lift 300 kilos then you can. As it's RPG and in theory in computer games anything goes, I don't see that it's a problem. I get quite annoyed playing female characters and finding that there are things I can't do just because I've chosen to be a girl, or vice versa. What I'd like to see is more user choice."

There doesn't seem to be too much evidence of programmers going out of their way to create choices like that, but for OASIS one encouraging sign is that the sexism debate hasn't fizzled out. Every now and again some magazine gives it plenty of space on the letters page and that keeps the argument alive.

As for the next ten years, Sandra is realistic. Hopefully, the education system will make more of an effort to make sure girls get as technical an education as boys and aren't restricted by stereotypes. Hopefully more women will become involved in computing as a result of the decrease in the size of the labour force. Even if they do she's concerned about the motivation behind it all. What's the guarantee that as soon as the shortage stops, women won't be forced straight back to the kitchen sink again?

Meanwhile, one of the biggest factors in the success of the sofware industry have to be the buyers, the games-players and the computer users. The individual computer buff, offended by a section of nipple somewhere in his semi in Suburbia hasn't got much clout. It's only when consumers band together that they can start lobbying the software companies and having some effect. A final bit of advice from Sandra for anyone who wants to change the world: "Get together and start making a fuss".

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ELVIRA

TYNESOFT





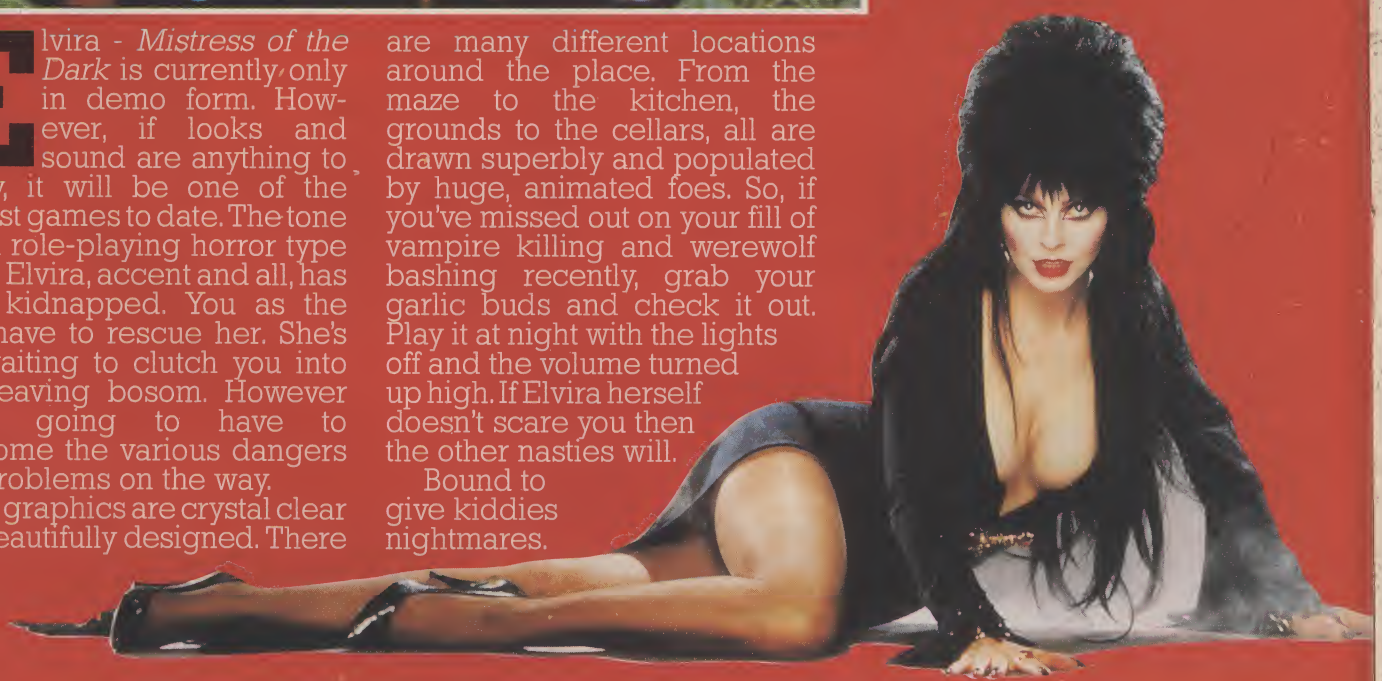




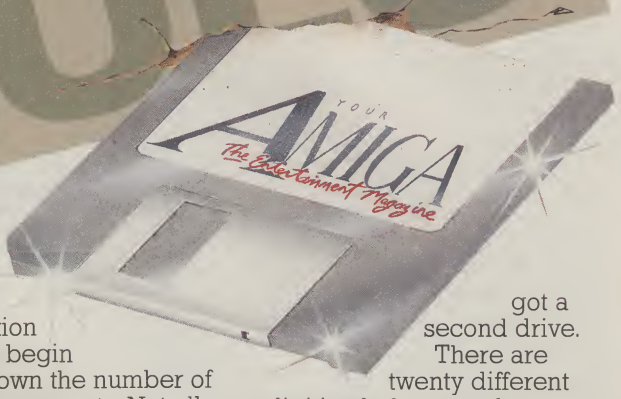
Elvira - *Mistress of the Dark* is currently only in demo form. However, if looks and sound are anything to go by, it will be one of the biggest games to date. The tone is of a role-playing horror type game. Elvira, accent and all, has been kidnapped. You as the hero have to rescue her. She's just waiting to clutch you into her heaving bosom. However you're going to have to overcome the various dangers and problems on the way.

The graphics are crystal clear and beautifully designed. There are many different locations around the place. From the maze to the kitchen, the grounds to the cellars, all are drawn superbly and populated by huge, animated foes. So, if you've missed out on your fill of vampire killing and werewolf bashing recently, grab your garlic buds and check it out. Play it at night with the lights off and the volume turned up high. If Elvira herself doesn't scare you then the other nasties will.

Bound to give kiddies nightmares.



HEREWITH THE CLUES



For any budding Holmes' or Poirot's, *Herewith the Clues* is a must. A murder has been committed. New Scotland Yard have collated as much evidence as possible to aid in solving the crime. Now you have to assess the information on offer and come to a conclusion by a process of elimination.

The game is based on the book by Dennis Wheatley and J.G. Links.The book came with photographs, letters and actual exhibits such as hair. All of these have been faithfully digitized for the game. You sit at a desk. On it are letters, a pile of photographs, a stack of exhibits, and files on the suspects. There is also a tea cup in case you get thirsty on the job!

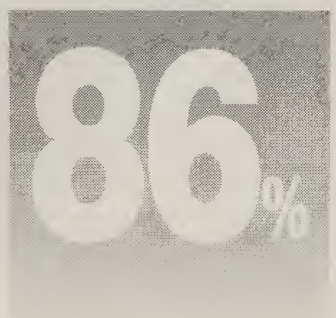
The information is set out in a system of files. Click on the relevant icon on the desk to access them. This opens a screen with files on it. The letters are from various members of the police force. Throughout them are references to different places and people. These can be clicked on and information about them is displayed.

By a process of elimination you can begin to cut down the number of possible suspects. Not all of the clues are in text; many small details can be gleaned from the photographs. For example one of the suspects has a white curl on his dark hair. An exhibit is a lock of dark hair tipped with white. Does this convict him or acquit him? This can be discovered from his file and details of his movements.

The game comes on two disks, which makes for a lot of swapping if you haven't got a second drive. There are twenty different digitized photographs on file; this makes for a long investigation. Don't come to any snap decisions, as the clues are purposely misleading. Just when you think you're making progress the clues throw up another twist to confuse you further. You definitely need to make notes as you go, as there is too much information to memorise.

This is a game which fans of mysteries, thrillers and Agatha Christie will love. It demands a great deal of time to play. You have to get into the feel of the investigation. CRL plan to have a disk which people who write in with the correct solution can obtain. Thus the incentive is there for you to complete the game. CRL have sucessfully programmed a new type of computer game. Check it out before you buy it though.

A. Cotter-Cairns





Have some tea my lord, some chrysanthemum tea." John! Johnie! Dinner!

Get out the Deer Stalker hat. Roll the tobacco and polish the magnifying glass. Solve the crime, drink the tea...

The farewell gathering at Café Café by the parents and sister of Jack 'The Shark' Costas who died in a wellington boot accident.



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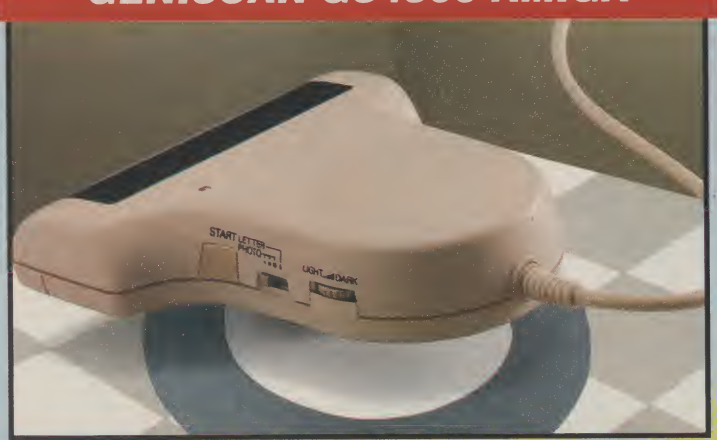




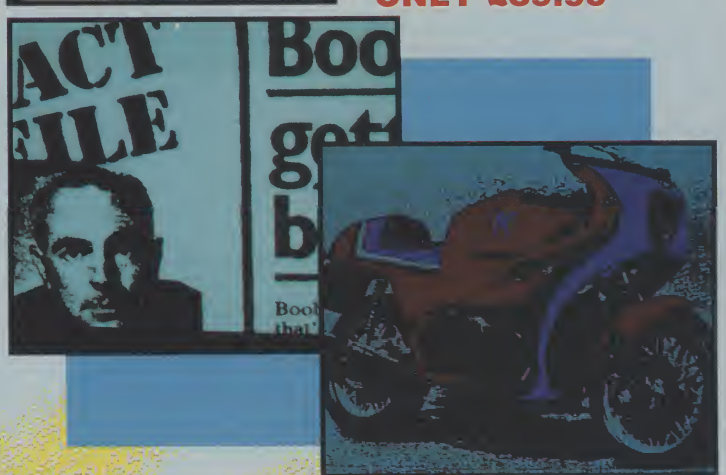
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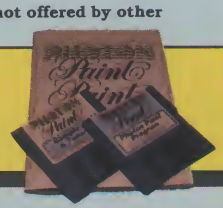
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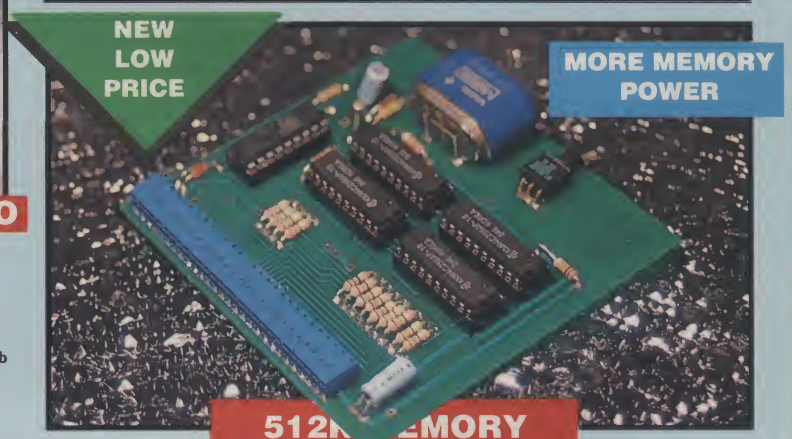
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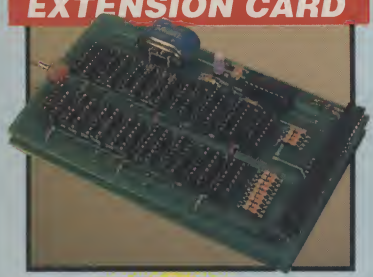
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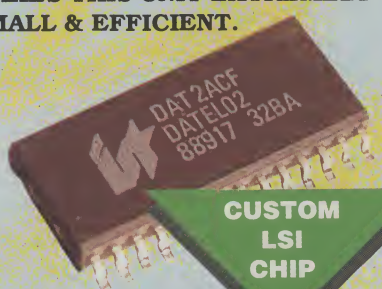
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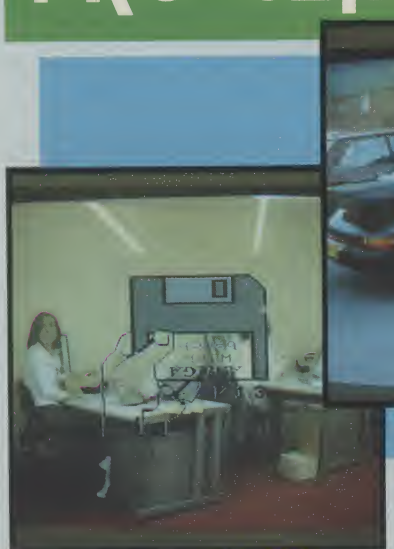
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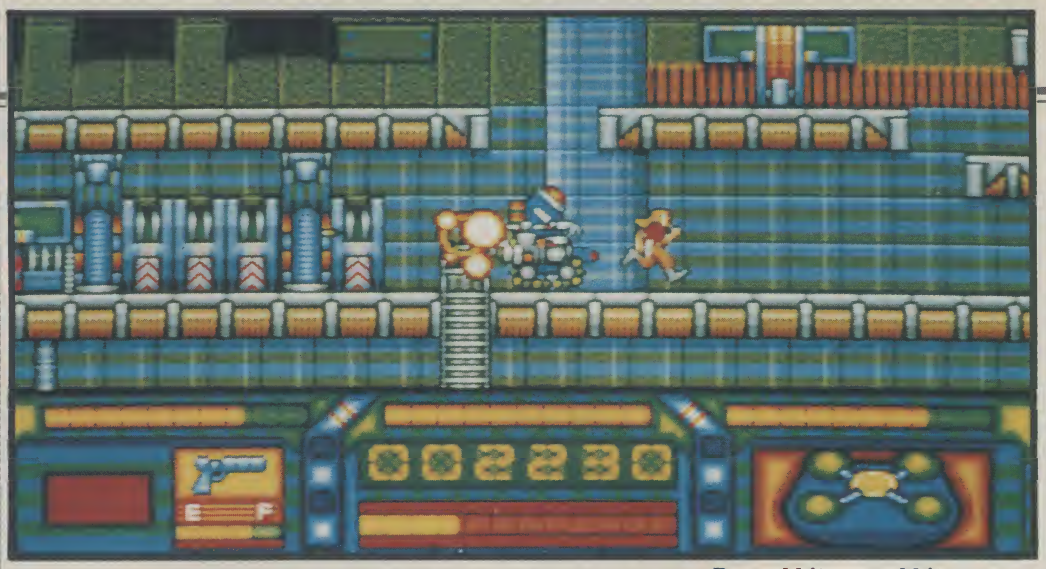
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PSYGNOSIS



STRYX

Run rabbit, run rabbit, run, run, run.



Dome city is an almost uniquely strange place; almost. The only thing which stops it from being unique is the existence of the other four. These are very strange places indeed. Robotic forms mince threateningly about. Sophisticated defence systems react to the very presence of an intelligent life form. Laser beams frazzle the eyebrows of any outlaw.

You're beginning to get the atmosphere of the place. Now imagine yourself in it. You've got to find a way to deactivate the droids using the computer systems. You've got to find the credit cards which open the various doors around the domes. You've got to ride the horrendously dangerous cycleways between the domes and drive the tricky mining ship about the ore mines. This is no picnic. Only heroes should apply for this mission.

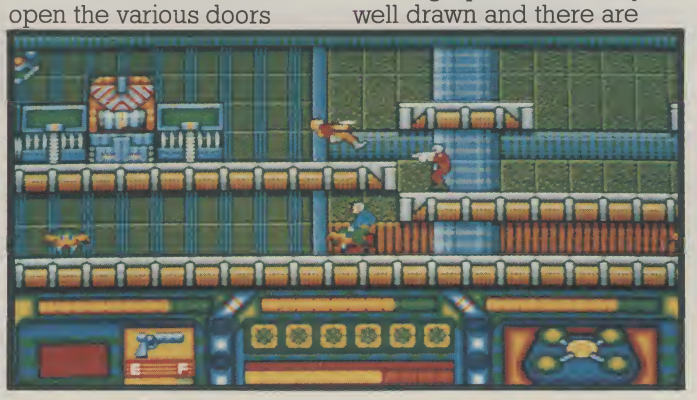
Blast the robots. Get shot to pieces. Domes and tubes and credit cards...

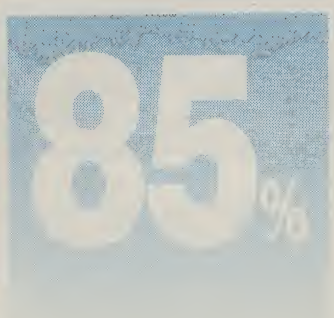
There are various items scattered about the platforms and ladders of the domes. These include the blasters (which come in very handy), grenades, time bombs, door cards and fuel for the bike. The doors are really tricky to find and the cards don't come easily either.

The graphics are really well drawn and there are lots of nice amusing touches. Like when you get shot (which reduces your energy bar somewhat drastically) and you fly head over heels. And the beautifully animated robots which swivel after you to blast away with their guns. Each dome is a real challenge, but not unplayably difficult either. Falling too far or landing on stripey floors is also dangerous to your frail health.

The sub games are quite well done. You'll need good reactions to handle the bike between the domes, and the mining ship is faintly similar to the classic *Thrust*. The game plays nicely overall, despite being a little on the tough side, I'd recommend it to the all-round games player. Check it out.

A. Cotter-Cairns





CONQUEROR



have to be careful to stay out of their way as if they detect you they'll be on top of you in no time. There is a radar which displays where the enemy tanks are. You can use the scenery to your advantage, to provide cover from enemy fire or to confuse the opposition. The arcade section of the game is sufficiently challenging to keep you going for a couple of hours.

Of course the real way to play *Conqueror* is to play the full strategy game. You are given a defence budget with which to buy tanks. This increases as the skirmish becomes a full scale war. The attrition game is a nice stepping stone betwenen the two game types. Overall I liked *Conqueror*. My only gripe is a political one. Why did the programmers make the player take a side - Russian, German or American? Surely they could have invented a flag and a nationality instead of potentially stirring up bad feelings? This appears to be the only anachronism in an otherwise modern and integrated piece of games software.

A. Cotter-Cairns



83%

Conqueror Supplement

Say 'Yo', say 'Yo', say 'Yo', Say 'Yo, David Brabin', 'Yo, David Brabin'. Who's David Brabin? My David Brabin, Your David Brabin, our David. I said program, program, program, I said pogrom, pogrom. pogrom, I said USSR, I said USSR, I said Leningrad, I said Leningrad, I said fight and kill, I said fight and kill, I said kill, kill, kill; I said kill, kill, kill, I said blood, blood, blood; I said blood, blood, blood; I said it's a hard man's world, I said a hard man's world, kill YO, KILL YO.

And Peter Lawrence, the vicar's son was coming into bowl from the pavilion end. He was bowling a slow left arm medium pace over the wicket. It was a tranquil June evening. Facing him was Jonny Johnson the guy who, at the last school disco, had managed to seduce Peter's sister into a walk round the boarding house lawns.Peter was not an aggressive child, he'd kicked his small terrier dog Weasel repeatedly for waking him by wagging his tail in his face and ripping at his blankets. Other than that there was not a hint of hot blood in him . Until now that is. The sun was going down behind the school. There was no church, Religion hadn't died, it didn't exist. The sky was getting redder. He saw red. He ran. He was fast throw arm through the wicket, through Jonny Johnson, through silly mid on, through the group of moms at the boundary rope.

Jonny Johnson spent three weeks in hospital. The doctors said that this was the first time they had treated a patient for cricket ball through the leg. He was lucky. Luck doesn't grow on trees.

When Peter woke up the sun had gone down. There were only a few lights on in the village. Silence was total. In that silence all Peter could see was red, all he could hear was 'YO, kill, kill, kill; I want blood, blood, blood' And blood he got because he knew simulation was actuality and truth was self-created.Yo, YA.

Rasta Jules




X-OUT
Rainbow Arts
and
AMIGA
The Entertainment Magazine

Rainbow Arts



Contour bliss and an outline for the old City of London.

Conqueror is a tank battle game. Not just any old tank battle game. Oh, no. This is a 3D arcade blast-em-to-bits with an optional strategy element. There are three levels of play. **Arcade**, where the object is to drive around causing utter havoc. **Attrition**, which is a cross between arcade and srategy.**Strategy** game, where you have the responsibility for everything from buying the tanks to deploying and driving them.

*Time to dust off the Panzer, twiddle the turrets, blast the b*****s...*

The game is presented in a forced 3D style. The landscape is a patchwork of colours which scroll around giving the impression of movement. There are twelve different types of tank. Each has different strengths and weaknesses and is given a different graphical representation.

The graphics are all a little angular. There are buildings to blow up, and lots of lovely landscape to trash. Not a game for the ecologically minded! The tank is a tad tricky to control. This is not due to incompetant programming, but more because a tank has many different functions. There are two caterpillar tracks to drive the tank; these also become the method of steering. After playing *Conqueror* you can apply for a position as a bulldozer driver!

The turret has to be controlled as well. This means there are controls for forward and back, both tracks, left, right, up and down turret, and fire. All this plus map and navigation shows you how difficult driving a tank is!

The enemy tanks are nothing if not big ugly swines. They drive around at top speed causing all kinds of havoc. You'll
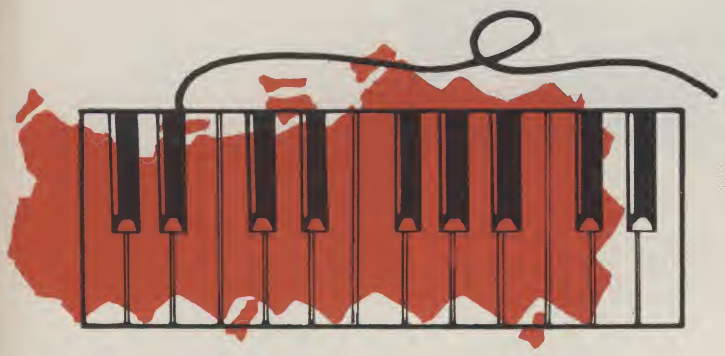


3D manoeuvring: where's the enemy, hiding in the trees?

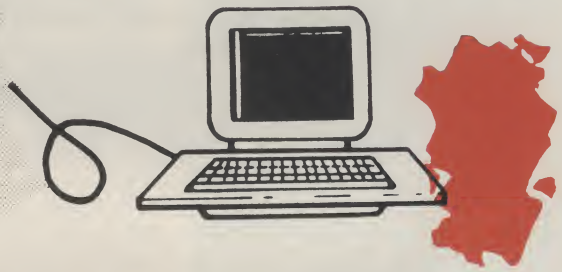


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U.S. GOLD

Knights of Crystallion



This is not a game but a culture simulation or so says the accompanying blurb. This game is many things but above all it is weird. The game is set in a city built within the bones of a mythical creature known as an Orodrid where you play the part of a clan leader and questing adventurer.

The object of your quest is the birth of the mysterious Crystallion. This creature of thought resides unborn within the crystalline brain tissues of the long dead Orodrid.

Before attempting the dangerous quest through the Orodrid brain you must hone your skills. The first and most helpful skill is that of telepathy. This is learned by playing the Deketa cards. A pack of cards is placed face down before you. Your aim is to match the pairs, thus removing them from the game in as few moves as possible. As you progress through the card games your powers develop and the number on the face of the cards begin to flash through. This process of card elimination is hampered by the mobile nature of the cards. The second skill to be learned is that of the Bosu Board. This intriguing game still eludes me after many a turn, as the rules appear more etherealness than fact. This game is presented as a challenge as you pass veils of the Orodrid's mind.

It's so weird it's brilliant

To ensure the continuing success of your family, you must ply your trade in the Haresh. Here you set the prices of your goods and attempt to corner the market. Failure here results in the starvation of your clan. Occasionally one of the other clans will call for aid and each family group contributes to their aid, this process works both ways so it pays to be generous.

suit by placing the collected crystals in the arena where charges build up and the crystals send forth bolts of energy. The prods collect these charges, but as they are mobile a collision with the crystals can spell disaster.

The final section of the game is the hatching of the Crystallion egg. Here you apply your mind to the clues gathered and select the fertile egg which will release the Crystallion and bring forth some serious weirdness.

First of all, this game is weird as you may have gathered but the graphics and the sonics are superb. The overall challenge is aided by your telepathic communication with the unborn Crystallion. It is one worth accepting.





Once the skills have been mastered you can attempt the veils. Dressed in a protective suit you wander the progressively weirder veils. As you travel the mazelike structure of the brain, searching for power crystals and eventually the crystallion egg, you will encounter several varieties of hostile being. Some attack your person, others steal the crystals, all can be obliterated by your plasma bombs.

The penultimate section of this game is the proda. Here you recharge your

Adrian Pumphrey

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Games

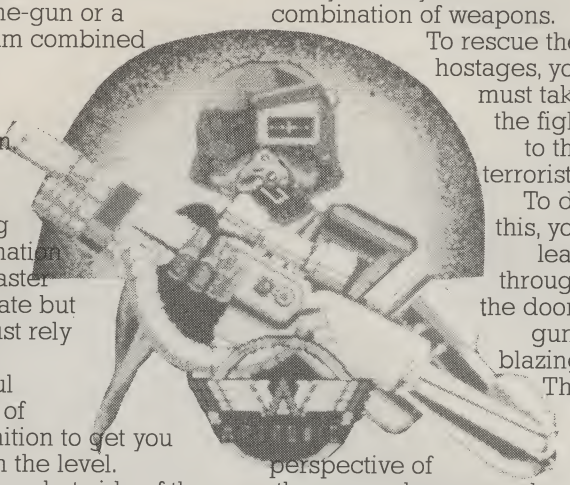
Soldier 2000

ARTRONIC

Dead 'ard and deadly, that's you. One of a new breed of specialised soldier, you fight terrorism wherever it raises its ugly head, with some really snazzy hardware.

Before you, you can see one of three women committed to the killing field. You start piling on the armour and extra weaponry until you hit the weight limit. Despite the array of extras there are two basic weapon configurations, with laser and without. Both configurations are stored as presets to save time. The laser does not require ammunition but it does need to recharge between shots so it's advisable to carry a spare weapon on the robotic arm for those little surprises heavy combat often throws at you.

When not equipped with the laser, you tote either a machine-gun or a magnum combined with a shotgun. This lead-flinging combination has a faster firing rate but you must rely upon a plentiful supply of ammunition to get you through the level.



The combat side of the game is split into two sections.

In the first section your find yourself patrolling the corridors of the enemy stronghold. Here you encounter the terrorists (who stay as long as it takes you to hit the fire button) and a multitude of objects ranging from a first-aid kit to points and extra ammunition, although it may not fit your combination of weapons.

To rescue the hostages, you must take the fight to the terrorists. To do this, you leap through the doors guns blazing. The perspective of the game changes and you see the scene through the eyes of the female warrior you control; as the bad guys pop up, you blast. Hostages can be shot so caution should be exercised. As the game progresses the light will fade and you will have to switch to infra-red vision. This mode allows you to see living targets but not obstacles. This means you may be able to see someone but not shoot them, as they are obscured.

In your armoury there are two special items. The grenades can be thrown to take out a cluster of hostiles but the mines (you only get two) are placed in corridors for the unwary. Battle damage to either armour, organic or cybernetic systems can be repaired only once, unless you chance upon a medical kit.

The levels progress from stockyards to offices and the hostiles become increasingly frequent. At higher levels the number of terrorists you need to kill before you can rescue any hostages gets a little ridiculous. A good game but little more than shoot the pop-up targets with a little variety thrown in.

Adrian Pumphrey

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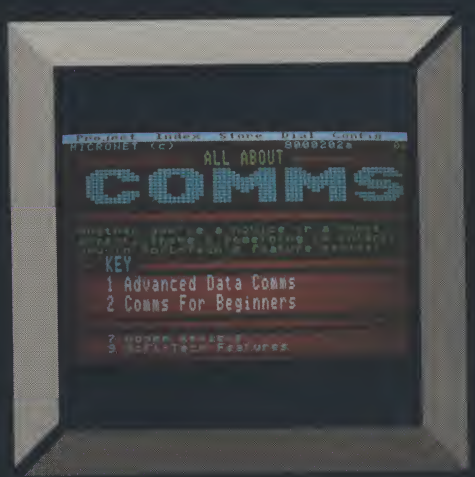














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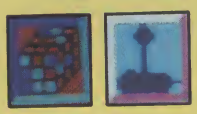
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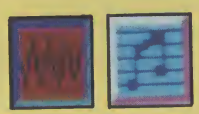
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The rival governments don't like this violation of their civil liberties. They have set up strategic defences to stop the *Overlanders* from succeeding in their mercenary missions. They have deployed motor cyclists, cars and lorries on the road. The cars will try to ram you off the road into a stationary object. The lorries throw firebombs off into your path. The motor cycles destroy you by ramming into you.

At the roadside there are machine gunners. These (oddly enough) fire bullets at your car in the hope of blowing it into little pieces. Luckily you are armed with a forward firing cannon. This despatches anything it hits with a satisfying explosion. At the start of each level you are given a choice of two missions. One is harder than the other but the rewards are greater. But as half the cash is paid upfront the temptation is there to go for it.



Cash can be spent on buying extra weapons and equipment for the car. These include a smart bomb, armour, bullet proofing and a turbo accellerator. These help you in your mission. As you destroy the enemy points and cash are awarded. Where have I heard this before? Oh yes, the score stays the same but the cash is depleted by spending. Very original. It does of course work quite well, as has been proved by other similar ideas in the past.



The graphics are excellent in *Overlander*. The cars are very well defined and move quite smoothly. There is a terrific title page with a great reflection of the title and a really neat car. The game is far too similar in looks to Road Blasters. However the additions to the game have lifted it way above that chestnut. The sound is somewhat disappointing, just a sort of bumblebee noise and no in game music.

That minor niggle aside, *Overlander* is the best of the recent crop of racing games to hit the market. It deserves to do well. Buy it with confidence.

A. Cotter-Cairns

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ARTRONIC

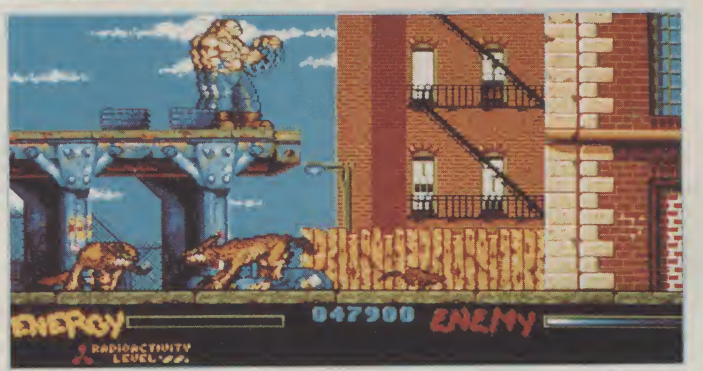
AFTER THE WAR

The year, 2019. The impossible has happened. Nuclear war has struck the world. You take the part of Jonathan Rogers, hero of post war Manhattan. Several colonies have been re-established, and our Jon has got to reach them. Unfortunately, the only way to get to the outer colonies is to get to a psychopathic professor and borrow his launching pad.

After the war, people will survive with their green wellies still intact...



That was the good news. The bad news is, apart from the prof himself, Jonathan has many radiation crazed street fighters to overcome. These come in many mutant shapes and forms but all are single minded in their violent determination. That is, to kill all life forms that aren't in the gang. There are the run of the mill fist fighters, the chain wielding thugs, the mutant Rottweiler/Alsatian crossbreeds, and the occasional mutant policemen who still have their guns.



The game loads in two parts.

The second part can only be loaded once you've got the password for completing the first. Each load has several areas and these are split into zones. At the end of each area is a huge gang leader. He's obviously eaten three radioactive shredded wheat as he is a tad on the strong side. He will punch, jump, pound, stamp and boot you into the asphalt.



You are, of course, quite capable of defending yourself against this menagerie of mutants. Within the two halves of the game you can perform up to twenty moves. These include the standard kicks and punches as well as more spectacular rolls and leaps. Any discarded weapons along the way can be picked up and utilized to complement your arsenal of moves. Also available are cans of drink for energy, extra time against the constant threat of radiation poisoning, and Statuettes of Liberty. These cute items provide bonus points.

The graphics are superb. The backgrounds are very nicely detailed without being overwhelming. The characters themselves move very nicely as they do their business. Your man looks suspiciously like he's wearing the Queen's regimental green wellies.

As you get further into the game you'll begin to notice and appreciate the nice touches more. Like the Last Hit indicator which flashes above a badly injured mutant. And the giant mutant rats which bounce around the screen looking like squirrels.

The gameplay is a nice balance of challenge and fun. What is disappointing, but not surprising, is the lack of a two player option. Still, the speed doesn't suffer from the size and colour of the sprites. This is a technically great game, and will please fans of violent games. Get it now, and play it until the real war.

A. Cotter-Cairns



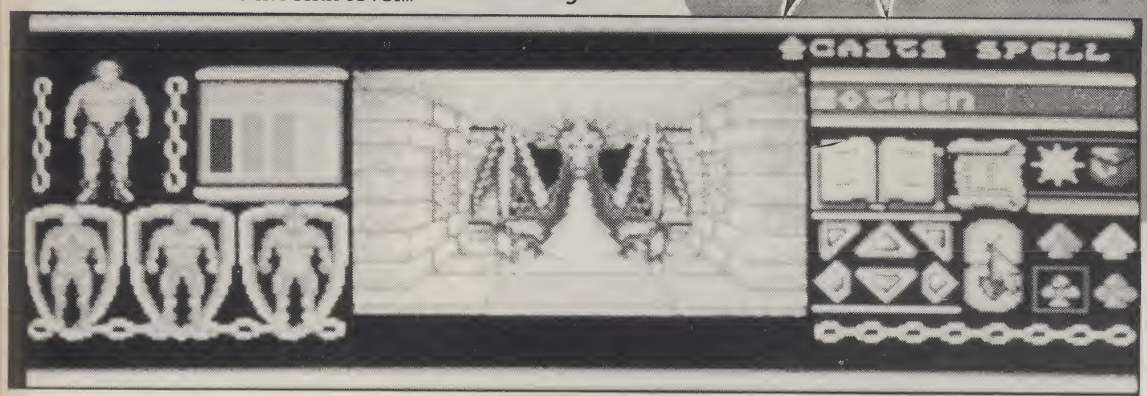
BLOODWYCH DATA DISK VOL.1

MIRRORSOFT



He was only 25 at the time he lifted back the bedcovers to be confronted by the armour-plated pillow and duvet bug.

Ardent *Bloodwychers* will no doubt by now have exhausted the original world. It's for that reason that Mirrorsoft have produced the Data disks. This disk should carry a warning; do not play unless you are an expert! My suspicions were first aroused when the party of in-built characters turned out to be sixteenth level...



Venture deeper into the unknown with your original party of monster mashers.

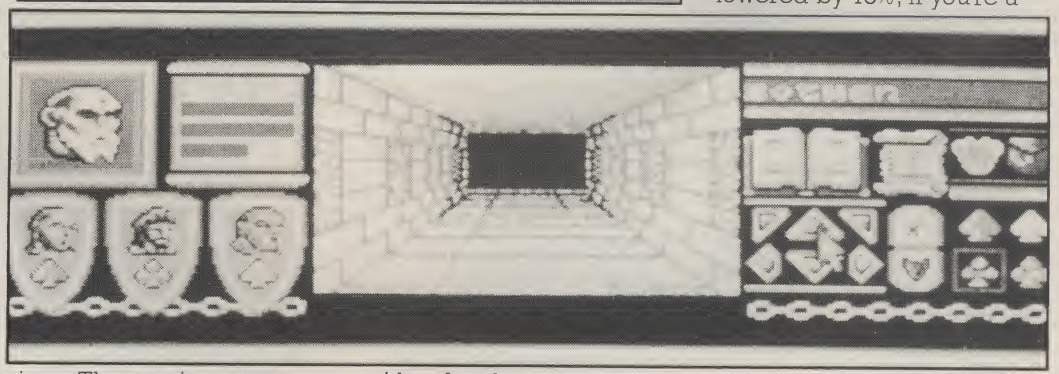
The idea is to get the original party to begin in the new dungeon. Hopefully they will be armed to the teeth in magic and armour. Their original hit point totals are doubled, which gives an indication as to the level of damage the monsters are dishing out! As a novice I had to use the party provided.

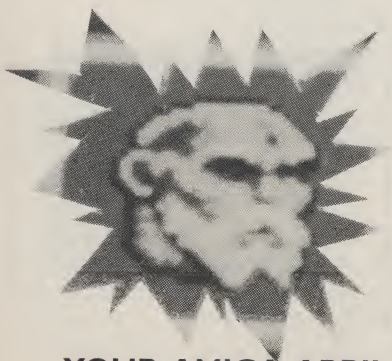
My first impression of the game was that it bore a remarkable resemblance to *Dungeon Master*. The game is icon driven. Every action, from sleeping to fighting and spellcasting can be accessed from an icon. The magic system works quite well. There is a spellbook which contains all of the spells a character knows. The pages can be turned over and the spells selected. Then the power can be varied by adding spell points. This also affects the chance of spell failiure.

There are a few options which are unique to Bloodwych. Anything which you may meet can be either fought, run away from, defended against or communicated with. An attempt can be made to recruit them into the party. You can dismiss members, call them back, reprimand them or compliment them.

The new dungeons are wickedly designed to cause all sorts of new headaches. There is an inescapable pit, guarded by a giant red Dragon, amongst other equally devious traps...Magic items abound in the new dungeons. The innate party have several powerful ones at their disposal. Other ones include magic armour and new wands, an Elf bow and arrows and so on.

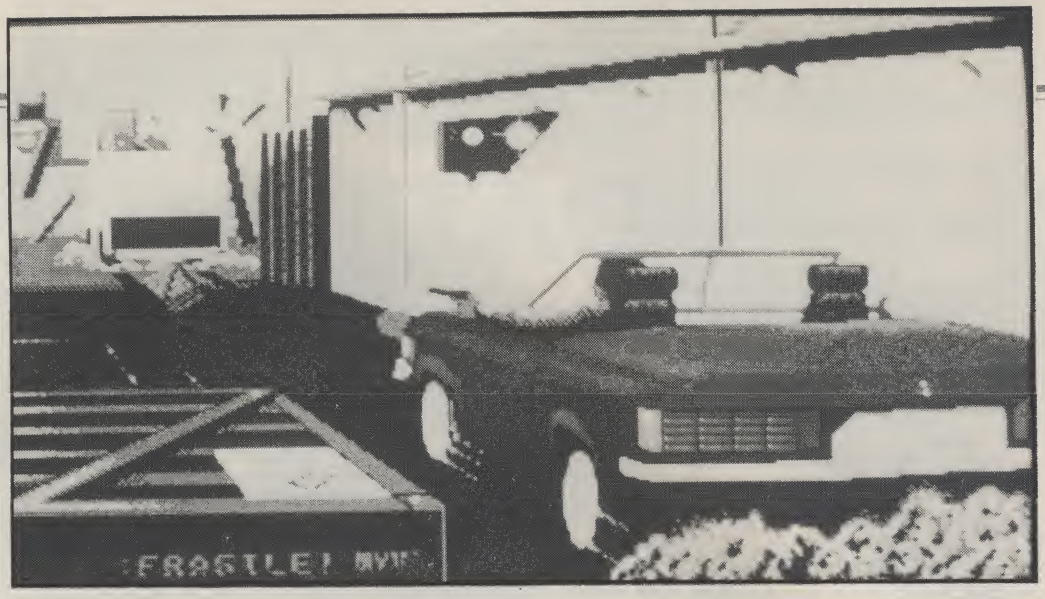
Novices beware! for the data disk contains a large amount of incredibly tough problems and is difficult to get into. For the true value of the package to be realised the player must have his own original party to implement. The percentage should be lowered by 15%, if you're a newcomer, but fans will love it.





A. Cotter-Cairns



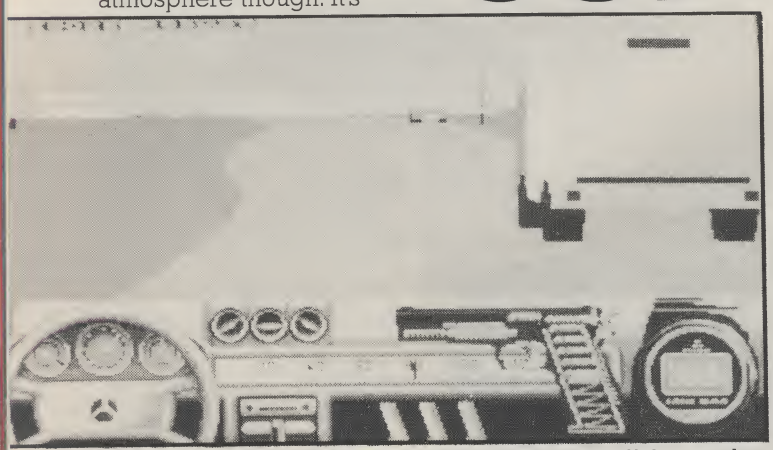


BEVERLY HILLS COP

Eddie Murphy stars in this rehashed film licence. Dust off the Video to get yourself into the mood...

Eddie Murphy may well be best loved for his performances in the *Beverly Hills Cop* movies. Will the game have the same effect on the fans? There can be no doubt that Eddie features in the game. The out of game graphics are digitized shots of the lovable Cop. And during the first section he runs and squats just like in the film.

This game cannot really be called a close attempt at capturing the film's atmosphere though. It's more a strange mixture of game types which culminates into a four-part test of arcade skills.



The first stage sees Eddie stalking through a warehouse. Around him are crates and boxes of all kinds. Criminals leap into view and blast away at our Ed. Luckily he can reply with his Magnum and shoot them down. Eddie can also run left to right. This section is very reminisent of Robocop. He has a time limit to reach the end of the warehouse. Should he suceed then it's onto the next section.

This game puts Ed behind the wheel of a Cop car. He has to pursue three vans and shoot them from behind. All the time there are cars coming in the opposite direction. Should Eddie collide with them, the van or go off the road a life is lost.

The third section is an exploration game. Ed has to sneak into the house of Bruno Bardolino. This is made more difficult by the armed guards that Bruno has employed to stop film star cops from breaking in. Eddie must run around the maze, blasting the guards. Occasionally he finds a machine gun which gives him rapid fire.

The final section is a three dimensional maze in Dungeon Master style. Our hero has to explore the house and ultimately blast the evil Bruno to oblivion. The good news is that he is armed with a pump action shotgun. The bad news is that there are yet more guards around. Ed's energy is represented by a skeleton which is depleted by hits. There is a large area to explore and this is the hardest section of the game.



The graphic standard varies throughout the game. The first section is side-on, the second is from behind the wheel, the third in forced perspective and the final in first-person perspective. Most of the games work fairly well and pose a challenge.

This game seems a little undecided. It is nice as a mixture goes and quite playable. The driving section is short which is a shame because it is the most impressive. Try before you buy.

A. Cotter-Cairns

74%



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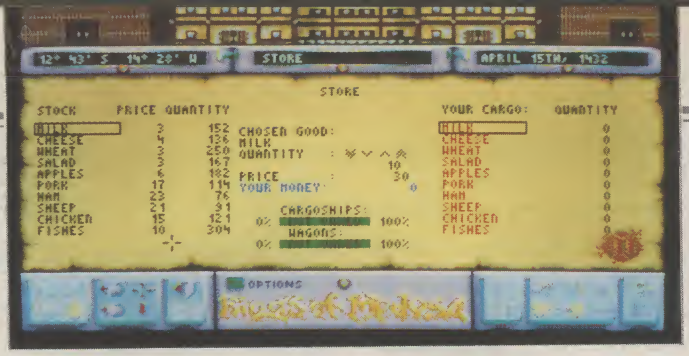
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RINGS OF MEDUSA

Your father made a good and worthy King during his better years. However, age comes to us all, and he's finally abdicated in your favour. Ruling this kingdom is no trouble at all, as it is a peaceful domain. Truly a united kingdom.

But suddenly it all seems to be falling apart. Friend fights friend in pursuit of an unknown cause. The threat of civil war hangs over the whole domain. Your father discovers that an evil Goddess, Medusa, is corrupting the minds and souls of your subjects. So you're going to have to stop her any which way you can.

Being a Goddess grants Medusa a kind of Diplomatic immunity, so wandering around the country is not going to work. As magic is your enemy it figures that magic is the way of dealing with it.

To meet the infamous corrupt Goddess, you'll have to assemble five magic rings in a temple. You'll need armies to hunt for the rings, and they cost money. Guess what? You start with none at all. This means that every penny will have to be either found or earnt. Ways of raising money include trading, gambling and out-and-out violence. You could also go treasure hunting if you're feeling lucky.

The game consists of a main map of the Kingdom. This displays the various towns and villages, as well as your forces. There is a bar along the bottom which displays the various iconized options, and the date. As you move around the scenery (which is beautifully drawn) the time passes.



Take on Medusa, the evil Goddess, in this Fantasy epic.



Once at a town, you can elect to enter it or attack it. If you choose to enter then you'll see a small plan map of the various buildings. These can be entered to do business or obtain information.

Around the towns will be potential recruits for your army. These are of several races including Dwarves, Gnomes and Ogres. Once recruited they must be carefully deployed to use their maximum potential. Once an enemy army is encountered, units can be sent out to battle or recalled at will. The outcome of the battle is displayed, and should you win you'll get the enemies' money. Possessing any of the magic rings will have a positive effect on your army. This might just be seeing exactly how tough the army is, or it could increase its strength.

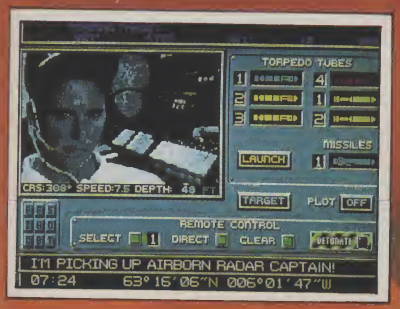
Rings of Medusa is superbly balanced and very well produced. The game unfolds very subtley and nicely. The graphics are drawn very impressively and with good attention to detail. The result is a winning combination.

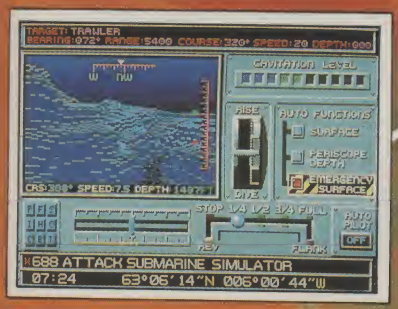
A great one for fans of strategy and wargaming.

A. Cotter-Cairns



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Behind the ScreenS

Three high profile women involved in the computer world! Do they see any need for change? What about positive discrimination. Is it a chauvinistic industry, all boobs and no brains? Paul Rigby bares all.

If you care to flick through a number of back-issues of several computer magazines you will find that the subject of women and computers is a sensitive area. That is, if the associated letters pages are any gauge.

There are many readers who have their say in the conference areas of many magazines but what about the women who actually work in the industry? In an effort to get contrasting points of view I asked three respected and successful ladies who occupy differing posts in the software industry: Anita Sinclair, who stands at the helm of **Magnetic Scrolls**, Linda Wright, the imaginative author of a number of "homegrown" adventures and a new PBM system, and Danielle Woodyatt, the Public Relations Manager at **US Gold**.

Its an obvious start, some would say clichéd, but how are women treated in the software industry? Anita Sinclair,

"Perfectly! I've had no chauvinism, or whatever you want to call it, at all. I think people were a little surprised to find that I had the technical knowledge I have. To start with, people may have, occasionally, tested that – out of curiosity, rather than anything else."

Danielle Woodyat admitted;

"When I first joined the industry I think there was a lot of sexism there because, obviously, you've got to prove yourself. Now, though, I have an excellent relationship – equal I would say."

So do women have any skills or advantages that men do not? According to Anita Sinclair,

"Absolutely. On a general level, women are particularly adept at looking at a situation as a whole rather than concentrating on specifics – women make good managers."

Linda Wright believes women have certain advantages as game writers,

"I think women can be more sympathetic, using a softer approach, in how they portray their characters, although that quality would come more with age. Teenagers haven't got that experience of life to pull on.

A Bear in a Skirt: Gallery 1.



Danielle believes that women are more adaptable and,

"... ready to listen to the other side of the story before making a decision." In fact Danielle believes men are more responsive to women in the areas of sales and public relations.

"... the things they tell you and the letters I get! They look on you as a sister-type figure, a sort of Marjorie Proops. They tell you all their problems. Many men look upon females as easy listeners."

So why is there such a low percentage of women in the computer industry? Anita:

"Well, I would say that, firstly, women aren't that turned on by computers. At the age boys go off to play with computers girls go off to play with boys. So I don't think that girls get into computers at the right age. Most boys only become interested in girls at the age of sixteen so I think puberty interferes with a girl's interest in computers. I also think that, generally, women don't like to play games that much."

As a mother, Linda believes school has an influence,

"Girls aren't supposed to be interested in computers. When it comes to the classroom it is the boys who take over. My daughter ... won't join the computer class at school because they're all boys in it and she finds that off-putting as boys watch for the girls to make the first mistake."

Danielle commented that women are frightened off because of the technical aspects and that they believe computers are a;

"... male orientated market. If they knew what the industry was about I believe that there would be more involvement from women."

So what can be done to attract more women into the industry? Is it, in fact, desirable? Anita;

"Exactly! is it desirable? I think it's being sexist to say "Oh, look we've got a shortfall of women, lets go and get some." If three people come to me for a job, one of whom was a woman, I wouldn't give her any special treatment. If she was better at doing the particular job, that I had in mind, than her counterparts, then I would give her the job."

Danielle believes that awareness should come from wider areas,

"... the media has to become more widespread, with more positive TV coverage, for example."

Linda considers it desirable, even from a more practical viewpoint, to attract more women into the industry.

"Many women work on VDUs, wordprocessing and so on, I have done that myself, but if anything goes wrong with the software they're stuck. Schools should encourage girls more, even by setting up a female computer club."

Linda also brought up another important issue when she commented on the lack of interest, by the local school's headmaster, in computers. He only brought them into the school because he had to. Certainly, many senior educational posts are filled with members of the older generation who may have a fear of, or a total lack of interest in computers. Do girls suffer most because of this?

I'm sure that you have all seen examples of "sexist advertising" in the various computer magazines – Barbarian, Vixen, Psycho Pigs UXB, etc. But what would happen if women had complete power as to the type of games and advertising that was used! Would the scantily clad women stay? Would more scantily clad men appear? Would sex disappear from ads? Anita;

"If your target audience is 90-95% men then it's perfectly reasonable to sell something geared up towards sex because sex sells anything. If the audience was 95% women I don't think images of men would appear because women aren't that way inclined. I don't think women get that turned on by visual sex."

Danielle has a slightly different viewpoint,

"I don't think you need to do that kind of ad to sell a game. But I don't think women would get rid of it, it would just be done in a different way. We don't do ads like that any more, anyway. You have the Advertising Standards up against you when you do. You can't have too much violence either, because of protests from certain retail outlets."

In fact, US Gold are in regular contact with retailers, such as Boots, especially before a game is released, so there will be no delay getting a game onto the shelves.

Linda surmised that things would slowly change but,

"... it would not be businesslike to change that sort of advertising altogether, so I think some of it would remain."

Linda did express her liking for some of the more artistic pieces of advertising. I agree with her. In fact, I was puzzled and angered that the excellently produced artwork depicting the Angel of Death was banned, presumably because it displayed a pair of bare breasts. However, this image was so far removed from reality I felt that it suffered from extremist viewpoints.



Danielle Woodyatt, Public Relations Person at US Gold, with more than a few things to say about the roles and goals of 'girls'.

Talking of which, Linda added that she was a member of Oasis but left because it was too feminist for her taste.

But is this form of advertising a vicious circle? Linda made an interesting comment on this point,

"If you look at the hype, the majority is aimed at male teenagers. That is obviously off-putting, because women take one look at it and ignore it because it's not aimed at them."

This begs the question, is the male orientated market being held artificially in place by self-perpetuating hype? It is my own opinion that women have a large presence in the adventure-type game market. Does the balanced advertising of such games (*Jinxter, Scapeghost*, etc) increase female participation?

Going back to Anita's comment on "visual" aspects of advertising, her comments answered my query as to

why men don't complain about scantily clad men (as women have complained about scantily clad women). Anita's answer lies in hero worship rather than exploitation. In *Barbarian* Buy our game, grow a hairy chest, develop bulging muscles and get the girl. Women do not respond to that "visual" effect.

Danielle, while agreeing with that, added,

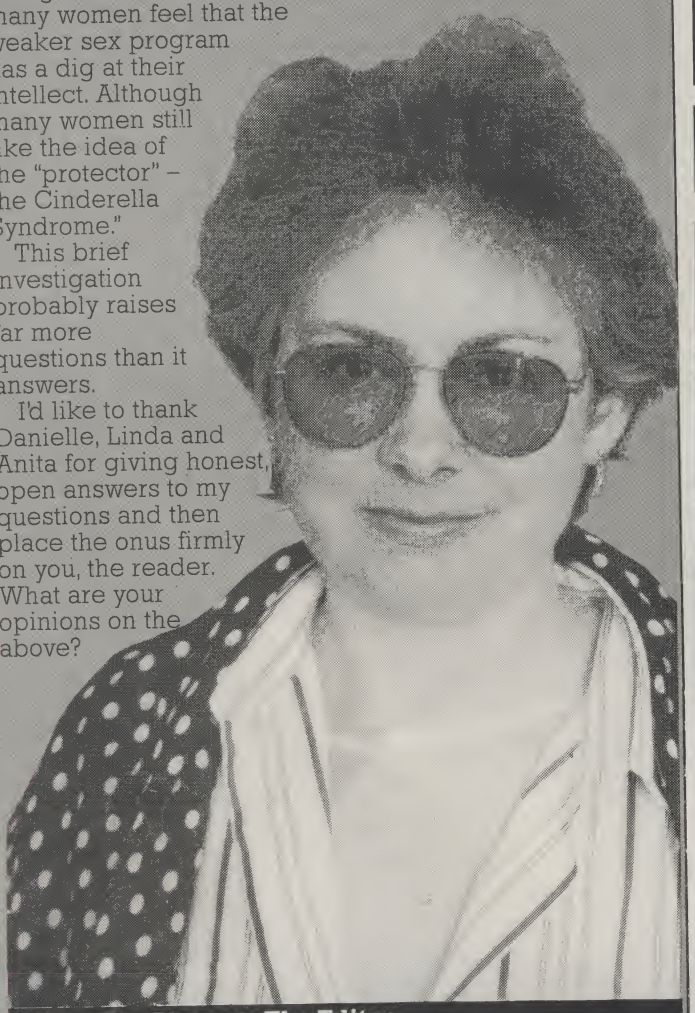
"Women may look up to talented female actresses, for example, such as Kim Bassinger. She doesn't expose her body but women may look up to her and say "God, I wish I was like her." Maria Whittaker [in the infamous Barbarian advert] hasn't done anything to make herself a heroine. Why would you want to look up to her? Whereas Rambo and Batman "save the world". They've actually achieved something."

How about two games, one displaying women as the weaker sex, the other portraying women as heroines? What criticism would they receive? Linda,

"A lot of women are fed up with being cast as the weaker sex. I think many women feel that the weaker sex program has a dig at their intellect. Although many women still like the idea of the "protector" – the Cinderella Syndrome."

This brief investigation probably raises far more questions than it answers.

I'd like to thank Danielle, Linda and Anita for giving honest, open answers to my questions and then place the onus firmly on you, the reader. What are your opinions on the above?



Linda Wright, computer adventurer extraordinaire.

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TINTS AND HIPS

The most important priorities in *Drakkhen* are mastering the magic system and equipping your characters with armour. The former is purely a question of practising your technique and learning when to cast which spell. More of that later. There are two ways to equip your adventurers more fully. The first (and most unpredictable) way is to roam around the countryside, bumping into random monsters and killing them. The odd one or two will yield a bit of armour or two.

The second, better way, is to approach the first castle. To enter it you have to use your scout as he has the highest dexterity. He can dodge past the chart if you wait for its fin to pass to the right of the drawbridge.

Use this method to equip all of the heroes with a shield. When you've done this click on the examine icon. The Prince asks you to name him. Get the Priest to activate the down arrow with a line across it and the field vanishes. To kill the Prince go up the stairs, turn left and go through two screens. Kill the guards and search the table. Get the key, go right back to the stairs. Activate the key and go through the door. You should be in the chapel. Go through the door at bottom right.

In here is a huge beast. This is not the Prince himself, but a close henchman. Kill him off with care as he is a hard nut to crack. Hopefully he will grant you loads of useful items, including a magic goodie or two. Arm yourself with these before going back to the bedroom.

Once inside the castle (everyone else follows the scout) you will see a force field and a shield on the wall. Get the scout to pick this up and use it as it increases his protection by five. Then leave the castle again, save the game and go back inside. Hey Presto! the shield is on the wall again.

Go through the door at the bottom. Here is the Prince and is he ever big! Killing him requires a bow in all probability as hand to hand combat is very dangerous. He will always carry a choice item or three. Should a character die, go to the river and try to find the Anak temple by following it...

Grapple fans 'Hi', and welcome once more to tints and hips for Drakkhen. As promised, details of how to find the second castle, a map of the first castle, and the best chance you'll ever get of reaching the 20th level...

For those of you who want a crack at completing the game, I recommend that you ignore the tips printed last month. Sure, you have to kill him off eventually, but the actual solution involves carrying a message from him to his sister in the east. This does rather indicate that he has to be alive to receive her reply! So for those of you who'd like to complete the game I'll be writing a serialized solution. The power hungry should kill off the prince and anything else that moves.

More of that later. Go to the prince, then question him. He'll ask you to go to his sister in the east. Leave the castle, do a quick save, then go walkies. To find where the east actually is, Wait for the sun to rise! It's much quicker to go cross country. This does however involve an extreme risk. To go cross country means strolling through the centre of the island. There are flashing triangles all over the place. These are - wait for it - Dragon summoning points. Tread on one or even near one and a big fat Draggy poos will jump down.

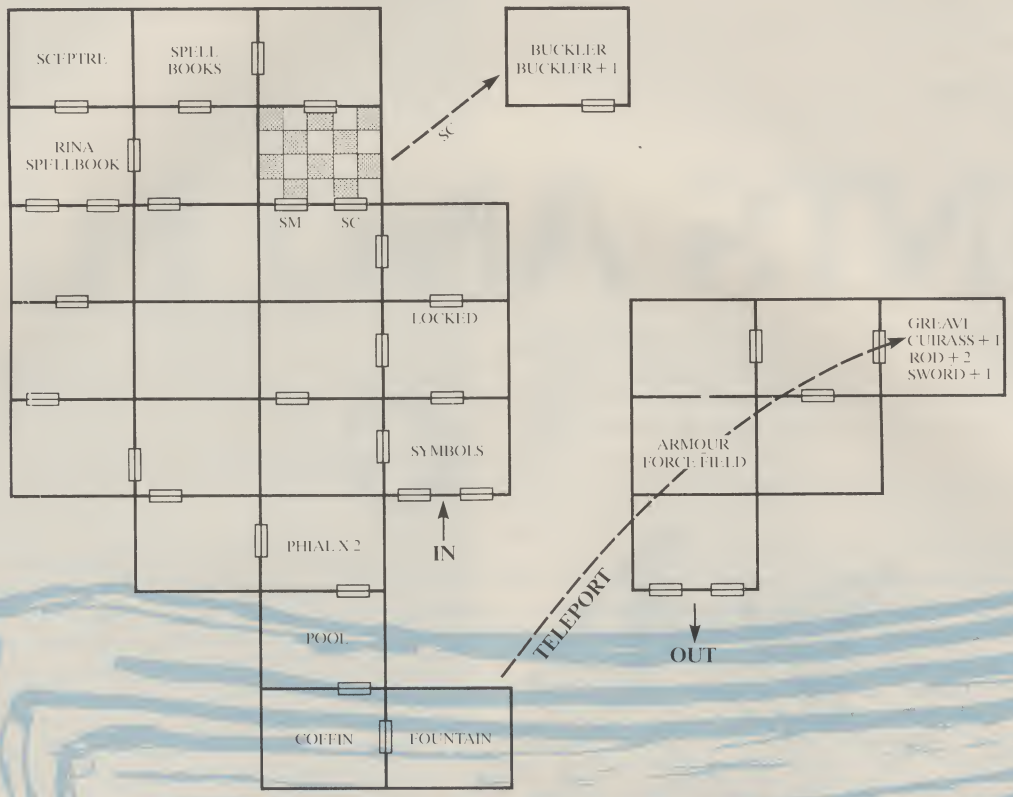
Power players should leap up and down with glee at this point, especially if they've got a bow. But the small minority should try their best to escape. Press return. This makes you face the opposite direction. Now reverse at high speed and pray it doesn't follow you! Face back the other way and keep going east. Assuming you survive, you'll get to a windy road. This will lead to the second castle which looks remarkably like the first. Enter it (if you're on a high enough level) and you'll see that it is wrecked. Now go back to the first castle and you've completed the first task.

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SITTING IN A FIERY MOUTH

How to master the magic and monsters in Infogrames' fantasy world

HAAGGKHEN OF WATER



Start by getting as many bows as possible. Ideally you should get one for each person. Now try to get to the centre of the island with as much power as possible. If your priest or wizard is on a high enough level, stick up a force shield **(Key S)**. This will stop the Dragons from breathing on them and killing them. Make sure that you save the game before entering the flashing areas and if you are sucessful then get out and save the game! Recuperate your lost power before going back into the fray.

With any luck and a bit of judgement, your priest should be of a high enough level to ressurect **(Key X)**. This gets the party back from the dead. Alternatively, get to the Anak temple and pay to have them raised up. Travel around, generally stonking on the monsters and getting lots of nice tasty magical items. Now ransack the castles and beat up the princes!

A. Cotter-Cairns

THE KRISTAL SOLUTION

How to complete the epic arcade adventure.

The first thing to note when reading these tips is that there is a good deal more to The Kristal than just completing the game. Experiment with the characters in the game. There is a good deal of story which unfolds as you progress. So get involved with the atmosphere and bear the solution in mind; unless you want to complete it badly of course.

Anyway, here's how to complete it. The basic tips are as follows; get as much strength, psychic points and Skringles as you can. The first two can be got by eating, being charitable, watching your language and being peaceful on Novala. Skringles can be got from the Kring, and Mervin and Strell on Zapminola will lend you some if you ask.

The key to your room can be found in the King's Head tavern. It will either be in the park on the back sprite line or in the square on Zapminola. When you find the beggar, give Skringles twice and accept the pommel. Find Gloop and ask him what he does. Accept his

invitation. If you have trouble finding him then try around town by the blank wall or the palace way. You might even have to go into space and come back again.

Tell the guard at the palace that you have an invitation. Go inside, go past Nerod and get to Kring. Take the Skringles. Then meet the Princess and say 'It's a secret'. Take the ring of Belz. Pick up the scrool from the arch to the right of the green door or by the right pillar in the palace gardens. Buy some Froodle and Frandanas from Screena in the market square and use them for strength. Give a donation to Boris the Butler for charity.

Go through the green door, through the centre arch and onto your ship. Choose the top icon for Zapminola and take off. When in space it is best to decellerate and keep the enemy as small as possible to shoot them and the bullets. Once a wave is wiped out speed up but slow down if reinforcements arrive.

Find Aunt Polly, ask her who she is and accept Multipep. Find the lady in white and give to the Minolan children's fund. Give charity to Malagar and go into the Kring's Head. Buy grelge and fissionchips(!) from Venkor and use them for strength. Skringles can be borrowed from Strell Noto or Mervin the Mauve.

Use the key to get into your room above the Kring's Head. Pick up the Heatpro Tabs under the bed. Listen to the radio then return to your ship. Select the icon for Glysta. When you get there, pick up the Psychisorber and have some swordfights to gain experience. Go back to the ship and select Feltina.

When you arrive, use the Heatpro immediately and find the Sword of the Spheres. This can't be picked up if you haven't got the Pommel. Return to the ship and visit a few different planets.

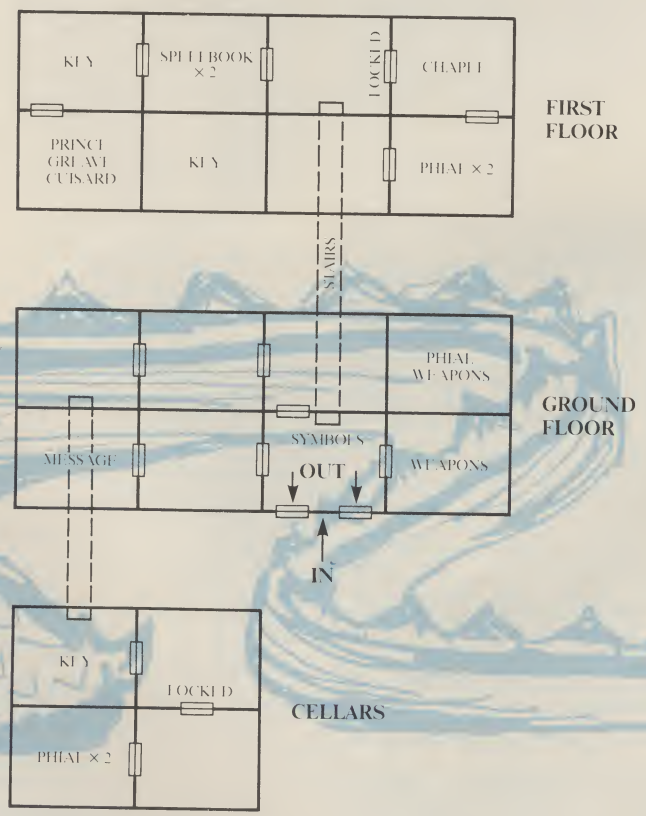
Follow the blue scorpion through the magic ring. They only show up after you've taken eight space journeys. After Redhead and the Princess have passed, use the ring of Belz. This won't work if the scroll isn't held. Ask Malvalla where you are and acccept the Belt of the Celestial Sisters. You will return to the ship automatically and travel to Magno.

When you are released from the Brain Cell (if you have enough Psychic points) you must kill Redhead in a final Swordfight (you must have the Sword of the Spheres). Then confront Finn Shadok in a psychic battle - he'll be defeated if you have the psychisorber and out shoot him.

After defeating the Shadok, enter the door which will now be open and watch the finale. You have gone with the flow! A few final tips - Fighting and swearing on Novala will deplete your psychic. Fighting with the Sword of the Spheres on Novala won't let you benefit from the extra strength. Using Multipep drains your psychic. And only use the ring of Belz twice before you meet Malvalla in another dimension.

Mary Seacole

DRAKKHEN CASTLE 1 MAP





BLADE WARRIOR

A once pleasant land now lies despoiled as it enters its final death throws under the careful watch of the evil Murk. A land thrown into shadow is no place for the meek and only the fabled Blade Warrior has the skill and the lack of brains to challenge Murk at his own game. Your only hope for survival and redemption of the land is to collect the pieces of the shattered tablets which will enable you to banish Murk for all time.

Through lands of chaos he boldly strides with book of spells and trusty blade to welcome the denizens of the dark.

Perpetual twilight does not lend itself to bright colours. Your character and the scrolling landscape he traverses are shown as silhouettes. Behind the main landscape the parallax scrolling shows distant towers and gates to new paths. Tramping through the wilderness is not a task to be taken lightly as many a foul form is eager for your blood. Occasionally you will notice small splashes of colour, grab these as they are spell ingredients. Plants are collected easily but some of the living ingredients seem a trifle reluctant.

As you wander from tower to tower meeting the reclusive wizards the wildlife attacks. Often a seemingly harmless piece of shrubbery uproots to attack, or flying creatures swoop down and transform before your very eyes. Monsters are not limited to the mundane as many a form of mythical creature yearns for your blood. Several factors influence combat; the size of the attacking creature (head-chops are fairly pointless when fending off the little folk), and the lie of the land as more often than not you find the combat taking place on uneven ground. During combat it is wise to check the Moon occasionally as its waxing reflects the state of your characters health. If your victory is in doubt you can always resort to a little offensive magic but this is a finite resource and should be used only as a last resort.

Using the map feature you soon locate the first of the towers. Here you can converse with the resident wizard and trade in magic and information. Items usually requested by the magicians are spells and artifacts. Before trading with a wizard for a piece of the fragmented tablet, ensure that no other wizard requires the artifact you are about to trade.

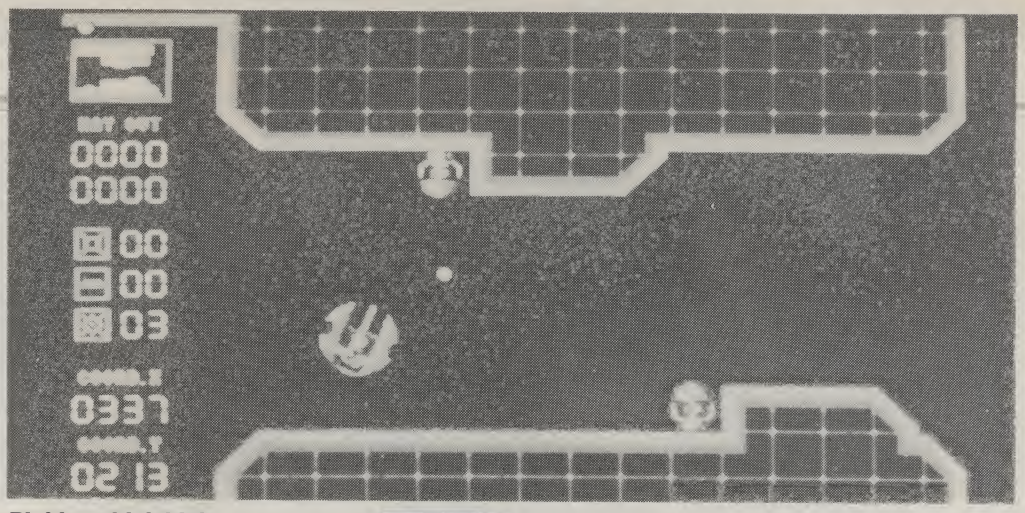
To replenish your stock of spells you must return to your own tower. There are two ways to do this; one is to walk, the other is to brave the perilous ride upon dragon's back. Once back in your tower you can flick through the pages of your spell book to select the spells you wish to create. Once a spell is selected one of the spell tubes begins to smoke. As you add ingredients the smoking tube will fill. When full the spell can be made and stored. Although spells ingredients are not listed you soon learn what each spell requires through trial and error.

At first the arcade element of the game dominates play but as you visit the wizards the strategy element begins to emerge. The monsters encountered are lent a grim aspect by the silhouette technique used and the stalking Murk adds an element of tension. A good all round game for those you like to deliberate before hacking the head off the opponent.

Adrian Pumphrey



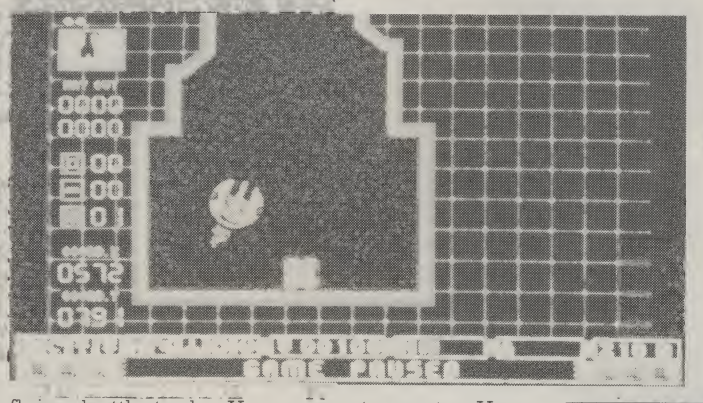
ARCANA



Blobbety blob blob

Rotor

Arcana has given you the chance to join the elite *Rotor*-Raiders. A force sent to infiltrate enemy lines in *Rotor*s, or flying battle tanks. Your task is to destroy the defence systems of your enemy, steal energy from them to keep your craft powered and transfer fuel to your home base.



Anyone who has played Thrust will have a feeling of Deja Vu when first attempting to become an elite *Rotor* pilot. Your ship is placed within a cavern and you must guide it around avoiding enemy fire and picking up objects on your way. Gravity effects your ship and you'll find that you require a quick dab on the thrust button to prevent yourself from colliding with the walls - not a good idea.

Control of your craft is simple to learn yet difficult to master. You guide your craft by rotating it and applying thrust in the opposite direction that you want to travel - watch out though, too much thrust and you'll end your days as a red spot on the cavern walls.

Collecting pearls that are planted around the playing area are used to power your ships transformer. This device is used to transform the pearls to a variety of other items, these include fuel, an engine upgrade, new armour, a better laser and even an extra ship. Of course the higher the value of the upgrade the higher the value of the pearls that you require.

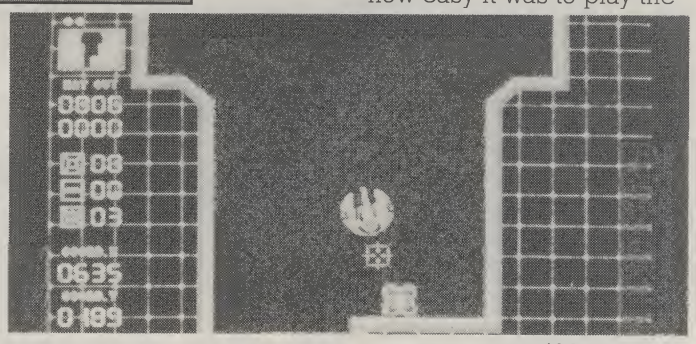
Once again you're thrown forward in time to battle away against enemy forces, plunder riches and make yourself number on honcho.

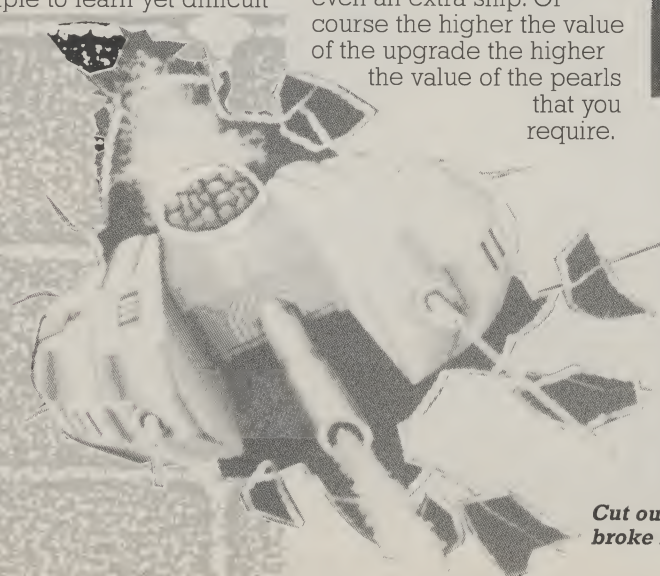
Because control of your rotor is so fiddly your onboard computer provides a number of training sessions so that you can get to grips with manouvering it before you meet the enemy, you must pass through these training sessions in order to gain the passwords that will move you on to the missions.

The password system that this game uses is probably its greatest downfall. Before you can enter any mission you must work your way through various selection screens of your onboard computer and then enter the password. Password entry isn't simply a matter of typing the password in, you have to use keys to cycle through the alphabet and select the letters that you require. If you just had to do this at the start of the game or when you were given a new password then everything would be fine, unfortunately you are forced to go through this tedious task every time you wish to tackle a mission, even when you want to play the one that just killed you.

Graphically *Rotor* offers nothing stunning but the display is adequate for the game.

This is one of those games that should get you going back for just one more go. Unfortunately I found that even though I fancied another game I couldn't be bothered to go through the tedious password entry system. A nice try but more thought should have been given to how easy it was to play the game once you'd been killed.



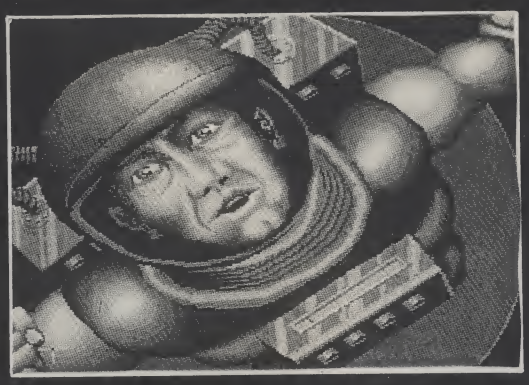


Cut out blaster going for broke in Rotor.

Stuart Cooke

70

AQUANAUT



Fissionchip Software ltd

If you saw *Abyss* at the cinema, and don't fancy the prospect of swimming around in hidden depths while suffocating to death, I don't blame you. But thanks to the latest game from *Fissionchips*, marketed by *Prism*, you now have the chance to relive all those moments of peril again.

Harrummph. Anyway, this is an aquatic adventure that concerns a plot by aliens to take over the world, and lots of stuff about ecology. But that doesn't really matter, well not for about 20 years anyway.

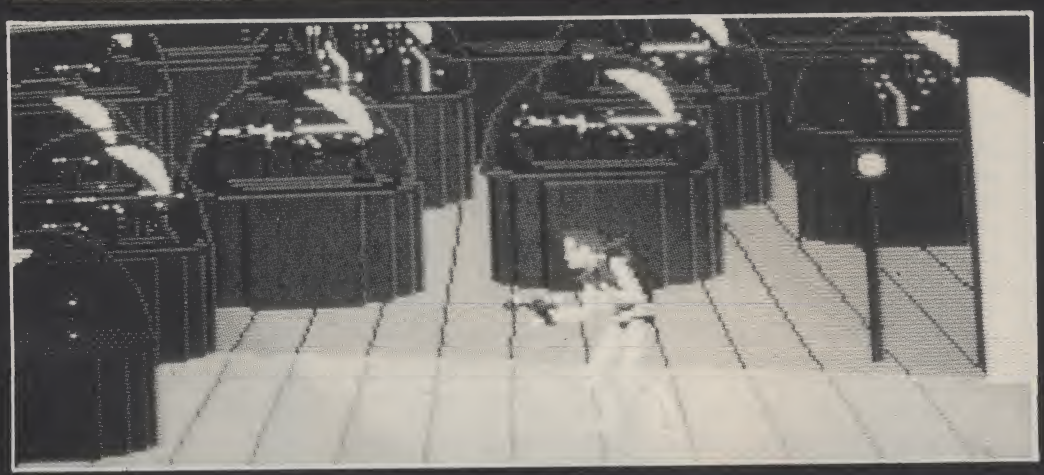
The game is in three parts, completion of one giving you the password to the next. This means you can jump straight into part three if you've completed the first two. Or for lucky reviewers like me it means you can play all three sections without completing any because I've got the passwords and you haven't. And I've seen the ending anyway, and it's jolly good and a decent reward for the effort needed to complete the game.

The first section is an arcade style sideways scrolling swimalong, shooting sharks, jellyfish, and other life endangering hazards. Dock with a mermaid, if you know what I mean, and your oxygen is boosted back to full. Yes, drowning is an ever present threat in the first two games. As long as you keep the aquatic menace at bay the only other thing to bother about are the cargo pods dropped from above. Shoot these and collect the equipment for later in the game.

The scrolling and animation are first class, and I especially liked the way the sharks and swimmer turned around in the water. The first section is really just a matter of trying for an hour, being relatively simple. Not so part two which is arcade adventure time. Mapping is essential as you swim around a cave system populated by stingers, gas bags and rockodiles (sic). Using equipment to blow away rockfalls and finding where you can replenish your oxygen are the main worries in this section. A week of concerted effort could see you through this. Then again it might take you a month.

Part three of the game is undoubtably the hardest and longest, as it has you running around an underwater city. It could take a very long time to finish this final section. Seeing the end is worthwhile, but it's going to take a lot of effort and map making to get there.

Clad all in rubber it's time to investigate some nautical naughtiness.





• Aquanaut is Fissionchips second game, and is certainly more accessible and immediately playable than *The Kristal* which no-one has finished yet incidently, but could take almost as long to complete. The graphics are okay without being stunning, probably because they look much the same as the ST version on the latter sections, but have more colours on the first scrolling sections. The animation is good though, as are the sound effects, half of which were sampled in Mike Sutin's bath. Mike being the boss of Fissionchips.

Aquanaut isn't a brilliant arcade adventure, but it is a good one. The animation, the humour, and the strange gurgling noises all add to a bizarre underwater adventure that will keep you occupied for many months, if not until global warming causes the sea level to rise and you get a chance to play for real.

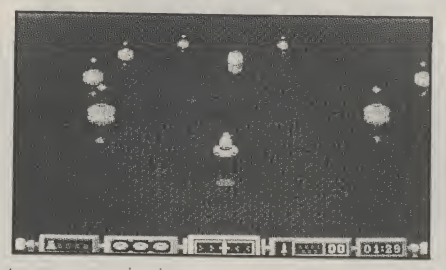
Duncan Evans

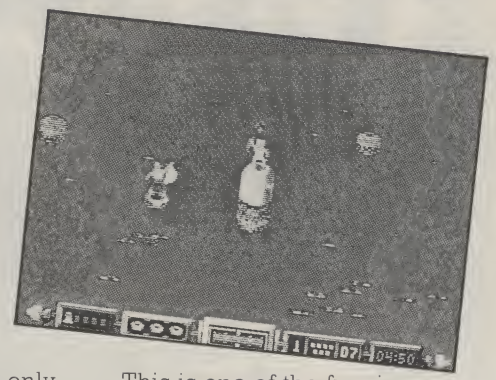
81%

TYPHOON THOMPSON

DOMARK

The Spirit Kingdom and Flying Saucers!





Fish by the bucket! The game centres around the exploits of a reluctant hero, some rather dubious spirits and the playful sea-sprites.

The jet sled you control has two methods of movement, the jet engine powers the craft along but for subtler movements the mouse can be used. Combining the jet power and the mouse movements allows you to soar through the air, skim the surface or crash dive. Your objective is to rescue a stolen child but to do so you must complete many missions for the sprites. The missions entail the collection of mystical items which must be ransomed for captured sprites.

As you approach the colony the sprites attack. They have many forms of craft at their disposal, some deadlier than others. Some craft specialise in ramming which serves little purpose except to spoil your aim. Other deadlier craft attack in a combination of ways.

On the first level you shoot the attackers with your cannon which releases a lone sprite.

Each successfully completed level not only gains both an extra life and an extra sled but an extra weapon. To supplement your cannon you receive an explosive blast which deflects the enemy, a sprite magnet to attract swimming sprites and stun bombs (self explanatory). To retrieve an item from the colony you must capture the sprites from all the islands in a colony. You take the prisoners to the central island and the animated exchange begins. This is one of the funnier aspects of the game.

As the levels progress, the colonies contain more and more sprites. At level four the water can contain so many liberated sprites that the game shudders to a halt.

This is a fun game with some excellent animation but it is repetitive. A game more suited to the occasional blast than whiling away the hours.

Adrian Pumphrey

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QUICKSTEP

Can you really go faster with a co-processor board?

After "more memory", a "quicker processor" is the next requirement of the microcomputer enthusiast. The Amiga's 68000 chip bears the strain of high resolution graphics and stereo sound very well because it is aided and abetted by some vital custom chips – a key element in the Amiga design. However there are ways of getting even better performance, but at a price.

The CMI Processor Accelerator provides extra speed in three hits: a 68000 processor running at twice the normal speed (14.32 instead of 7.16MHz), a MC68881 math co-processor or a floating point unit (FPU) and a fast ROM mode.

To take advantage of the extra-fast 68000 all you need to do is run the provided utility program which sets up a software switch. You can either operate at normal speed for software which won't show any benefit (eg games) or switch over to the faster speed for heavy applications such as desk top publishing, mandelbrots or ray tracing.

Further speed improvement can be provided by the FPU – which intercepts certain instructions and performs them with its own (faster) routines – providing the software has been compiled to use the IEEE libraries under Workbench 1.3. Aegis Developments (now defunct) are notable in this respect because they distribute separate versions of programs such as Draw 2000 for users of the MC68881 FPU. Check that the software you want to use has these facilities.

The third speedup option is to run the accelerator in fast ROM mode, simply by adjusting a jumper on the board. Amiga 1000 owners have the option to install a Commodore Kickstart ROM on the Processor Accelerator board. Some minor modifications also have to be made internally on the 1000 so you might like to get the suppliers to do the engineering for you! There are a few 500s and 2000s that can't handle this mode – although no harm can be done – so consult the suppliers first.

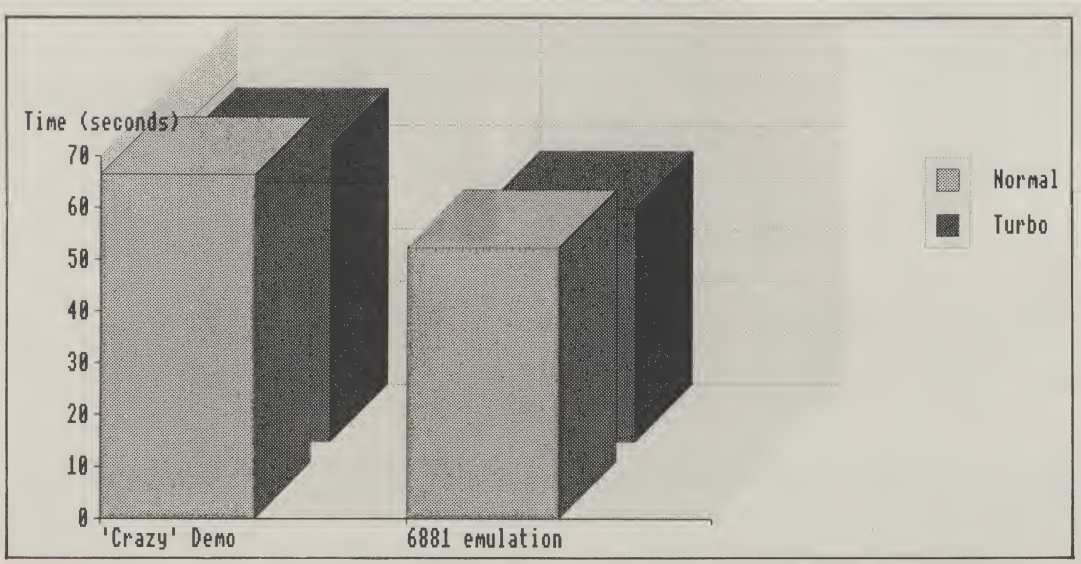
Power user on Power Up

What you want to know is that there are different boards for the 500, 2000 and 1000 and that they are easy to fit. The only slightly painful aspect is the removal of your original 68000 chip, but be patient and there's no problem.

If you are a "power user" all the time then you can swap a jumper on the board to come up to top wack when you turn on. This is also necessary if a program you want to run in fast mode doesn't allow access to the software switch via the CLI. A more sensible default is to come up at normal speed at switch on, using the PA utility to switch back and forth between tortoise and hare modes.

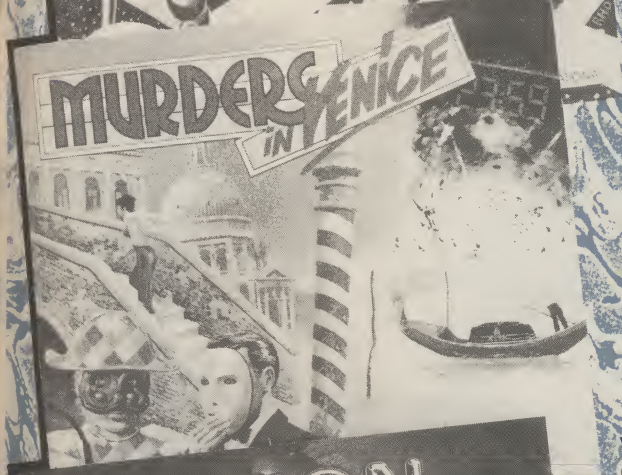
The answer to our question "can you really go faster?" is a positive "yes". However, the speed increases are not significant enough to justify purchase for everyday use. The sort of things you want to speed up, like disk filing, will not benefit. More memory or a hard disk are more sensible solutions. If you are running a CAD or DTP application then it's definitely worth investigating the Processor Accelerator with its FPU option.

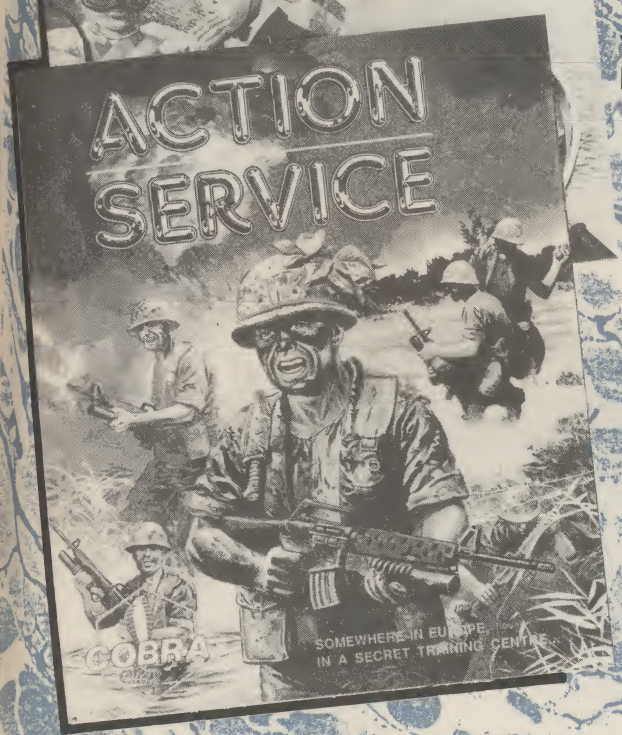
Mark Webb



The graph to prove it – you really can go faster with a Power Processor.







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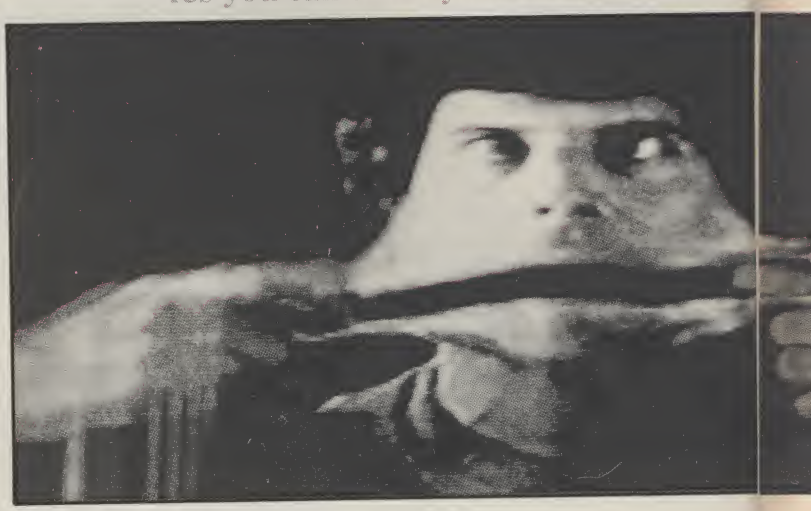
Yes you can teach your cat tricks too!

> "As Walt Disney said: 'Never forget it was all started by a mouse'"

OK, Walt was a genius but did he really know about Mice, Windows and Pointers before Rank Xerox, Apple and the Amiga crew? Did Steve Jobs watch Mickey Mouse when he was just a kid? We shall probably never know the answers to either of these questions so let's get on with the column.

If you want to find out what kind of animation you want, get into the public domain for a cheap sampler. The Fish disk collection is the oldest and most comprehensive and there are quite a few animation examples about.

Disks to start with are 29 and 116. Disks 112 and 115 have flying gulls over the beach, a Newton's Cradle, rocking chair and F-15 3D wire frame animation. But take care, 1Mbyte is required for these last two. Others to look out for are 53 (3D Pyramid, Camera and Clown via Aegis Animator's Player), 100 (Berserk), 106 (Deathstar, Swing and Lasers from a package called QuickFlix), 125 (ElGato, the walking, rotating cat), 109 (Animated machine), 127 (Nemesis - stars, planets and a black hole and Ripples), 126 (Only Amiga pyramids and balls), 123 (Car and unicycle accident!) and 134. Disk 29 contains three animations created in Aegis Animator. The Player program which Aegis put in the public domain relives the action for us. There's Grow-ur-own in which a robot creates a female robot (weird), Luna and a small jigsaw puzzle in flux.





Changing your still images, toning into tones, texturing into textures.

Death in the family

The commercial axe has removed Aegis - the foremost Amiga animators - from the game. No one can be glad that the people who pioneered some of the more interesting graphics programs for the machine and, with EA, introduced the idea of *readable* manuals, have gone under. Oxxi are looking after the product range but what happens to work under development in sunny California has not been decided.

Special request

At the moment the Deluxe, Photon and Digi Paint fanatics are getting away with massive coverage every month in this very magazine and getting free software too! So how about sending in your animations? Our screen photography team can present your work frame by frame for the profound enjoyment and education of the rest of us. No promises of free software, just the possibility of considerable frame, and fortune, if a software company sees your work and gives us a call for your name and number.



The Scene: Grandma has ripped off the verandah to mix herself a vermouth, with ice and lemon, as the evening mists come up. Meanwhile the chair's rocking.



Animation City,Your Amiga,Argus House, Boundary Way,Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 7ST
Disks will be returned immediately if accompanied by a self-addressed and stamped envelope.

Excellent Centre

If you are interested in animation then Amiga Centre Scotland - the sponsors of the Edinburgh Amiga Animation Festival and stockists of many goodies from the USA - is a good place to go to become enthused about your Amiga and its true abilities.

I recently paid a visit to the centre, for it is not merely a shop, which lies a short walk from Edinburgh city centre, set back off the road and housed in a granite building the colour of the castle rock.

Proprietor Martin Lowe and his team know the hardware and most of the software inside out. Martin admits that it is now impossible for one person to be familiar with all Amiga programs although 12 months ago he felt he came as close as anyone could.

Animators need speed so I got interested in a go-faster board which rests in the palm of your hand. A 68020 and 68881 maths co-processor combine in what looks like a simple, powerful add-on from, naturally, a German company **(Reviewed on page 66)**. Martin tells me that speed improvements are significant with 1.3 Workbench libraries and better still when programs are written to make use of the 68881. Martin likes to benchmark these improvements so that he can help customers with reliable information but, as you can imagine, there are difficulties when benchmarking a multitasking machine.

Pictures are the stock in trade of the animator so I had to take a look at SuperPic. This magic box provides genlock, colour digitising in realtime, on board RAM and much more for around £500

If you are looking for storage then there is the promise of cheaper, British made hard disc, on the horizon although they may not exceed the performance of the best of the current American imports.

One fly in the ointment for animators at the moment is the continuing high price of RAM chips. Having bought an unpopulated RAM board you can end up with a nasty bill for chips. Prospective Amiga animators might want to consider the advantages of buying an Amiga 2000 rather than 500.

In the world of Amiga, the lack of hard information before and after the purchase of software and add-ons is a matter for concern and good advice is all important. Having seen the staff of Amiga Centre Scotland in action I can recommend a visit.

That's it for this issue. Don't be shy, send in your animations.

Catch you next time.

Mark Webb

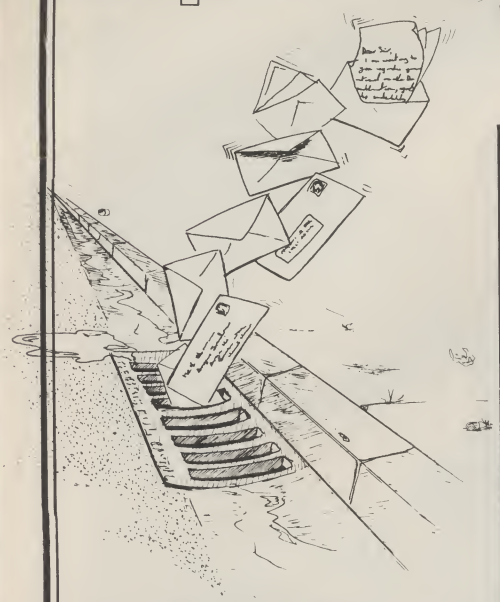


U.G.L.Y. you ain't got no alibi you're ugly.

LETTERS

S.W.A.L.K.

Drain Brain Answers YOUR Letters



Dear Your Amiga,

As an Amiga user myself I feel obliged to congratulate you and your staff for your improtant contribution in the war against sexism.

I am concerned, however, at the tenor of an article in the January issue of YOUR AMIGA. The piece, written by Rik Henderson, entitled Soft Celluloid, reveals a prejudice as damaging as the sexism that you now challenge.

The reference to "Batman . . . portrayed as a schizophrenic, a man who through the unfortunate death of his parents . . . feels he has to dress up in the guise of a bat . . ." is likely to reinforce the negative stereotyping of individuals labelled "schizophrenic". Mental health is an important issue at present due to the release from institutions of individuals who have experienced the impact of being labelled "mentally ill", some of whom bear the stigma of being deemed "schizophrenic".

Mentalism is as destructive as sexism and it is important to raise consciousness about the devisiveness of these prejudices.

YOUR AMIGA is at the forefront of a constructive exposure of sexism - go one better and also help us to fight mentalism. It will benefit us all and undoubtedly increase your readership.

Yours sincerely,
Mike Lawson
Vice Chair
MIND

Dear Your Amiga

If you are going to have brill comps like the Micro Music Hitmaster Comp in future, just remember not all of us can afford MIDI Equipment. So please have some more great comps, but please remember us poorer subscribers.

P.S. Keep up the good work!

Mr P Knights
Norwich, Norfolk

Dear Sirs

I got a copy of your mag + disk (December '89) for Christmas. For the past few days I have been on the verge of murdering the joystick as I cannot work out a way to get off level 32 of Nakamoto.
I should be most grateful if you would do one of the following:
a. tell me there is a bug in the program
b. tell me how to get off level 32
c. tell me the password which comes after KXP92.
A short while ago my subscription to another magazine expired. I am considering subscribing to another Amiga publication, and if you answer this letter promptly, it may help to influence my decision.

Yours in anticipation
Miss K Spencer
Basingstoke

Dear Sir,

I recently purchased the December issue of Your Amiga, which unfortunately had had the free disk removed.

I am sending you a cut-out from the front cover, as proof of purchase, in the hope that you may oblige by forwarding a copy of the cover disk.

Thank you for a decent read in your mag and keep up with the freebies, hopefully thief proof.

N.B. I have enclosed £1 to cover the cost of the disk and postage. If not required put it in the Christmas fund.

Dear Ms Spencer
at no time have we responded to threats of black mail so you'll have to keep murdering your joystick and banging your little animated friend up against the end of level 32.

Mr. Gill
Thank you for the £1.00 cheque. Fortunately for us, unfortunately for you, this was one of about half a dozen dodgy disks out of about 20,000 reproduced in that issue. Disk's in the post

Dear Vice Chair,
I think you're right. Batman is definitely aware of the context within which he lives. He doesn't suffer or doesn't appear to suffer from an inability to distinguish reality from unreality. He clearly knows who he's after and why he's doing it. He is definitely in his right mind.

Rik has been badly beaten up by the girls in the office for not distinguishing between a schizophrenic and a schizoid where the sufferer's disorder is not so precisely fixed. What do you think Mr. Vice Chair does Batman have a schizoid disposition? Perhaps it is not that either. Transanima rather than Transanimus. Is he a vindictive eccentric cleaning up the streets or a man cross- dressing as a bat?

Dear Sir,
I have written (for the first time ever to a playing guide) to send my completed list of Space Ace tips to help anyone wishing to complete the game.
After the excitement of the end sequence was over I realised I had completed a £45 game in just 2 hours of buying. This annoyed me as the programmers promised a harder game than Dragon's Lair, which I cannot finish as I keep crashing at the rapids. Yet Space Ace was easy to complete. I am not the best game player in the world either, as despite playing many games on the Amiga I have only ever completed one other game – Defender of the Crown and that took me several months of playing to finally defeat it.
Anyway, to anyone struggling to defeat Space Ace (and I doubt it) it is important to note that the directions I have given in my tips are JOYSTICK moves (and only require to to be pressed once), as Dexter does not always move in the direction pushed on the joystick. Timing is essential at most times and requires practice to get it right.

Yours Sincerely,
Paul Andrews
Monkland Estate,
Airdrie

Paul,
thanx for your leta. I'll tell you what, *Space Ace* has been solved so quickly by allsorts of all sorts. Our designer, Dave, (for his sins) solved it in 3 hours so you're right to think that not many cats'll have trouble finishing this one. But, BUT, it does have great graphics and animation it's a pity it didn't have the more procrastinating gameplay of *Dragon's Lair* to go with its £45.00 price tag.

Dear Y.A.
Regarding the free disk with the last issue of Your Amiga. On the Kamoto game you can get as far as level nine but that's if I start at level 9. I get all the objects from one side but can not cross to the other side. I have tried to jump across but it was too far. I tried to cross by the ropes but that did not work at all. Then I tried getting back to level three to see if that would work but that didn't work either. If you do not get all the other objects from both sides you are not able to get to level ten. I have written to G.T.S. a month before Christmas but have not heard from them at all, please can you help me.

Yours sincerely
Michael Hulme
Stoke-on-Trent

Dear Michael, you're fortunate because you've actually got further than anyone else here in the team at YA but we'll let you know about any progress we make.

Dear YA
Off the top of my head, I couldn't think of anything to say about your last two issues other than I thought that they were the best issues so far. Keep up the good work.
Alec Johnson. East Kilbride.



Dear *Your Amiga* For Christmas I received the fab game, *Space Ace* (well I liked it anyway), and I completed it after only eight days. So, one day I thought 'Hey! Why not send the complete solution to those groovy guys at Your Amiga!' So here it is.
Martin Hills. Sittingbourne. Kent.

Dear Martin, a lot of other people have also completed Space Ace and, very quickly too, some even more quickly than your eight days.
Did you think it was worth the vast amounts of money that you spent on it? Obviously you did otherwise you wouldn't have taken so much time to send us your solution. See March's issue for a similar solution.

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To get the monies answer the question: What does the word 'Amiga' mean?

Answers on a postcard by April 30th to Your Amiga, TOP TEN COMP **Argus House, Boundary Way, Hemel Hempstead HP2 7ST.**

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The Central Scrutinizer.

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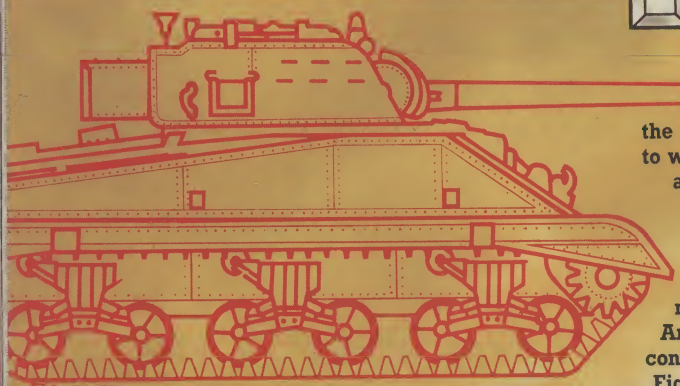
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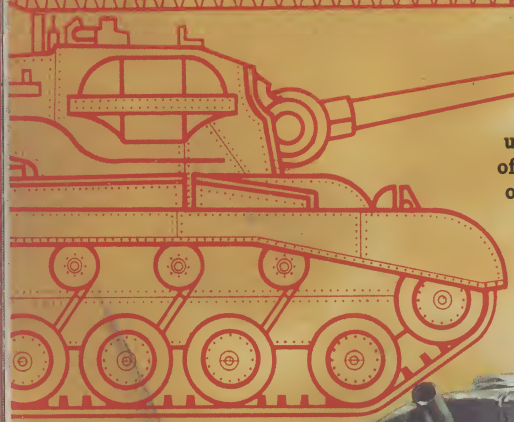
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